25

NEWES FROM THE NORTH.

Othervvise

called the Conference between
Simon Certain and Pierce
Plowman.

Faithfully collected and gathered
by T. F. Student.

Aut bibe aut abi.

Printed at London

at the long Shop, adioyning vnto
Saint Mildreds Church in the
Pultrie, by Edward
Allde. 1585.

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To the Right hono-

rable and his ſinguler good Lord Sir Hen-
ry Sidney Knight of the moſte honorable
Order of the Garter, Lord Preſi-
dent of Wales, and Marches
of the ſame.

Although there can be no Freendſhip (right Honorable and my ſinguler good Lord) to ſpeak properly where there is no equallitie between the parties, yet may the ſimpleſt and the meaneſt looue and honor the higheſt and greateſt, yea ſo much the more as their inequallitie is the greater. But that is not properly called Freendſhip but rather a dutifull looue and is harder to be expreſſed and ſhewed for the inequalitie aforeſaid. For Freendſhip is between equalls, or at the leaſt where the inequallitie is not ſo very great that the Offices and duties of Freendſhip which are the bondes and ſinewes therof can haue no entercourſe. I ſpeak this for my ſelf that haue long deſired occaſion to ſhew my hartie goodwil and affection vnto your Lordſhip which hath been ſomewhat hard for me to doo for the cauſe abooue remembred. And therfore hauing gathered this little conference: I made bold to dedicate it vnto my good Lord. A thing meeter to be my gift then woorthy to be preſented vnto your Honor or to go further vnder the name of ſuch a Patron. Howbeit, my truſt is that your Lordſhip of your accuſtomed clemency will accept a ſimple thing of him at whoſe hands nothing at al was looked for, and will alowe my good will towards the reparation of ſuch faults and Imperfections as are heerin.

So praying God to bleſſe your Lordſhip and proſper you. From London the twentie ſix of Nouember. 1579.

Your Lordſhips in all humillitie. T. F.

TO THE GODLY and Gentle Reader.

THou hast heer Godly and gentle Reader the Conference betwéen Sim Certain and Pierce Plowman two great Clarkes as thou maist vnderstand by their Discourse, which I haue gathered and reported as faithfully and as truely as my simple memory could retaine the same, and that with some trauaile which I accounted my dutie. First vnto them and others by them hérin mentioned. And secondly vnto all and euery good man and woman whose mindes and harts God may sturre vp vnto Godlynes and Vertue by their good ensample. Namely all such as are Fathers and Maisters of housholdes, but cheefly and principally of common Innes and Tauerns whose good or euill example spreadeth far and wide and I feare in these our daies rather in corruption of life and maners: then in edifiyng or increase of Vertue and Godlynes according to the saying of Iesus of Sirach that it is as hard for a Merchant to be no lyar and for a Tauerner or Inholder to be no drunkerd which thing although hée hath said to be very hard: yet (for the Inholder) that his rule admitteth exception, thou maist hér finde without traueling to Rippon in Yorkshire to learne and so for a grote or sixpence thou maist know ỹ which cost mée aboue fiue markes to learne besides my trauail and time spent, which yet if it please thée to accept: I shal account right wel bestowed, which God graunt, and that in all thy Journeis thy head ake not before thou alight in such an Hostry.

Farwel.

(‡)

Aut bibe aut abi.

The

The Printer to the Reader.

GENTLE READER, IF THOV finde any Imperfection in this worke either for the matter in substance or els for the deuision, the maner and forme therof I trust thou wilt alow a reasonable excuse alwel vnto the Author as vnto mee, betwen whome thy blame is otherwise to be deuided. Thou knowest that to write and reporte a thing at the mouth of the Speaker asketh a nimble hand and a great memory, if a man had his Toles ready for the purpose which yet this Author had not ready for nothing so like as any such matter, and therfore was forced to put his braine-pan in trust withall, and to write it in his way homeward.

In dooing wherof his care was greater to couch the matter truely in substance: then to parte or to deuide or otherwise to digest the same. Which he referred vnto mee, and which also I haue don as ỹ shortnes of the time gaue me leaue. Both which excuses, if it please thee to admit: thou maist in time to come receiue it in more perfection alwel for his part beeing the matter in substance wherof I dout not much hath escaped him. and also for the diuision beeing mine. Farwell.

W. M. in Commendation of the Author.

LEauing at large the Brunts of briniſh flood,
The pitched Feelds and fables finely pend:
This Author heer to doo his Cuntry good,
One woork of woorth his time & toile dooth ſpend.

The buſie Brain with cankred Enuie fraught,
That ſues and ſtriues for ſturring of a ſtraw:
May read heerin his leſſon largely taught,
And by the ſame deſcrie him ſelfe a Daw.

The Counſailer, the ſpokeſman, and the reſt,
Who ſimple ſoules to needleſſe lawing eg:
May learne heerby ſuch dealings to defame:
As driue poore men their bread with teares to beg.

The prating Sot whoſe peremptory ſpeech,
Is brayed foorth all Lawyers to defame:
Not far from hence may finde a cunning Leech,
To charme his tung and ſhr oud it in with ſhame.

But in few woords my meaning to imparte,
If you demaund what mine opinion is:
Hee hath doon wel, Gods bleſſing on his hart,
Who ſend me ſtore of Books ſo good as this.

Cœlum non Solum. W. M.

Antony

Anthony Munday to all curteous and freendly Readers in commendation of this Woork.

AS Tully did of vertuous life define,
And Ouid paint the odde conceits of looue:
And Maro squared in a direct line,
The hard assaults that valiant harts did proue,
In bloody Battails for their fames behoue.
As fliering Fortune should them chaunce to pay:
In vaunting verse as Maro tells the way.

But leauing now at large such fond delights,
Such Fables fond as pratling Poets vse:
This Author heer presenteth to your sights,
Such tales of trueth as may you force to muse,
To iudge aright the crime of eche abuse.
As heer twixt Sim and Pierce he dooth compound:
Such wise conceits as seldome hath been found.

When you haue read Iudge then the Authors pains,
His tedious toyle in wishing well to thee:
Thy freendly thanks, he craues no other gaines,
Which vnto him more welcome sure shall bee,
Then riches store if thou couldst giue it free.
Wherfore my Freends doo this at my request:
To heare and see and alway say the best.

Honos alit Artes. *A. M.*

Thomas

*Thomas Procter in reporte of the Authors good wil.

Among the worthy works,
which learned Tully pend:
The care of Cuntrie and of Frænds,
he greatly doth commend.
¶ Which lesson in my minde,
the Man which took in hand:
To pen this pleasant History,
did perfect vnderstand.
¶ For in the same he showes,
a loove vnto his Frends:
Beside a zealous minde of good,
that to his Cuntrie tends.
¶ Of Louers liues, of Warres,
ne yet of Wunders great:
Hee seemes to publish vnto vs,
but simply doth intreat.
¶ Of silly Men, whose prowl,
doth such experience giue:
As for Examples of our liues,
learnes eche estate to liue.
¶ Wherin the Author sought,
such meanes to publish it:
As in my simple Judgement sure,
might seem to prooue his wit.
¶ But for the careful paines,
which he hath spent herein:
Hee only craues for recompence,
your fauours good to win.
¶ wherby you may him moue,
to vtter his good wil:
when as occasion shall him serue,
in works of greater skil.

Nil Melius Arte. T. P.

* Iohn Peeterhouse to the Reporter of this Historie.

You that hast reported this pleasant History,
Wherof thine eyes and eares are a witnesse:
And hast intreasured the memory,
Of Pierce and Simon for their worthines,
Withouten hope of hire or recompence:
For thy long Journey, or for thy dispence.
¶ Thou hast acquit thy dutie vnto them,
In this behalf, and if I gesse aright:
Thou hast deserued well of other men,
Before whome thou hast set a Candle light.
Of Nurture and of Education:
By men of base and mean condition.
¶ Which some for that cause wil estæm the lesse,
Hauing respect vnto the circumstaunce:
The great apparaunce of vnlikelynesse,
Waying all others in their owne ballaunce.
As if that God could not reserue a few:
Such as him list his glory for to shew.
¶ For what though this age vniuersally,
Seemeth geuen ouer to corruption:
Sœmed it not so in the dayes of Elie,
When yet God had reserued many a one?
So hath he now, that are not gon aside:
Nor solde them selues to Couetise and Pride.
¶ As thou hast well shewed in this History,
What by thine owne proofe and experience:
What by thine Hoste Simons authoritie,
Which (for mine owne parte) I do reuerence,
And therfore (I say thank come to thy hand,
That hast it geuen vs to vnderstand.
¶ And puttest vs in hope that Charitie,
Is not stark dead though she be wounded sore:
By Pride and Couetise her enemy,
And that our God yet kæpeth some in store.
That both in dæd and word do sæk his praise:
God let them war and giue them happy daies. FINIS.

¶ The Reporter to his Book.

My little Book where so thou chaunce to dwel,
God giue thee fauour in thy Readers sight:
Whom if thou please all, thou must quit thee well,
And better then I feare is in thy might.
For that doth seldome chaunce to any one:
Better or wurse without exception.

¶ If any man or woman chalenge thee,
For any word or any argument:
Come not to seek thy defence at mee,
For I am not thine Author Uerament.
Get thee into the North to Rippon Town:
And there enquire for Pierce that worthy clown.

¶ And eke for Simon Certain at the Signe
Of the Greek Omega there doth hee dwell:
where welcome thou shalt be as I diuine,
Aske them whether thou hast reported well.
Their conference according to the trueth:
If they say yea, of others haue no rueth.

FINIS.

How

How the Author comming homeward out of Scotland through Yorkshire, chaunced to lodge in Rippon, At what signe, the name of the Hoste, the order and maner of the House and famelye. And his entertainment there.

Chap. 1.

IN my last return from Edenborough in Scotland, comming homeward through Yorkshire: I traueled somewhat out of the common high London way, of purpose to see the Cuntrie. And one day among others, toward euen: I chaunced to come to a little through fare Towne called Rippon, where at the very entring into the town I met a poore olde Woman, of whom I asked if there were any good lodging in the town. She answered mee that there was good lodging at the signe of the Gréek Omega. The Gréek Omega (quoth I) What do you meane by that? Nothing said she, but that there is good lodging and honest entertainment, which (I suppose) is all that you require. Then I asked her what was the good mans name of the house. His name (quoth she) is Simon Certain, we call him commonly Sim Certain. Sim Certain (quoth I) surely these are very strange names, and so bidding her farewell: I departed into the towne warde, much more desirous to be come to my lodging, for the strangenes of the names, aswell of the Signe: as also of the Good man of the House. By that time I had entred a little way into the Town: I was ware of a very faire Gréek Omega hanging forth as a common Signe, euen as the olde woman had tolde me before. And thether I went, and entring into the house: I found in the Hall the Good man, his two Sonnes, his Chamberlain, and his Hostler singing the C iiij. Psalme of Dauid very distinctly and orderly. The Goodwife with her two Daughters sat spinning at their Whéles a little distaunce from them. All which things when I beheld: I thought with my selfe that these things were yet more strange to beholde, then were

either the Signe or els the good mans name to heare. So I bad them God spéed. The Hoste very curteously arose, and bad me welcome, so did the wife also, and asked mée whether I meant to tary all night. I answered yea. Then he asked mée if I would sée my Chamber. No gentle Hoste (quoth I) I will not hinder so much your good exercise, for I am sure I cannot be lodged amisse in this house. Not so sir (quoth he) but ye shall haue the best that we haue and welcome. I gaue him harty thanks. Then hée enquired of mée, of whence I was, where I had béen, and whether I was bound. I tolde him I was a Southern man borne and dwelling, and that I had béen at Edenborough in Scotland, and was thus farre in my way homeward. In good time sir (quoth hée) and yée are hartely welcome into this part of Yorkshire. I thank you gentle Hoste (quoth I.)

The comming thether of Pierce Plowman, beeing newly come from London. His requeſt to the Hoſte to lend him fiue poundvpon a paune. The refuſall of the Hoſte, the queſtion thereupon moued, beeing the matter of the conference.

Chap. 2.

By that time we had talked scant half an houre: there came in a Cuntrie man a Neighboure, a iolly olde fatherly man, bringing vnder his arme a fardell of Bookes, as many as hée might well holde vnderneath one of his armes, he gaue vs the time of the day. What Neighbour Pierce (quoth our Hoste) welcome from London Sir (quoth he to me) this Neighboure of mine is lately come from where you are going God willing. Truely (qooth I) and this is happily met by grace of God, and as I verily suppose néere in the mid way betwéene Edenborough and London. With that Neighbour Simon quoth this Pierce Plowman (for that was his name) I am come to desire your help. What is the matter Neighbour Pierce (quoth our Hoste?)

Neighbour

Neighbour (quoth hée) to lend mée fiue pound for half a yéer, for truely (quoth hée) I haue spent all my mony at London, and haue not left my self so much as to buy my séed Wheat, wherwith to sowe my land this season. No haue neighbour Pierce (quoth hée) that was very ill handled, ye shoould alwaies so vse your matters that ỹ main stock be saued whole. Fye neighbour Simon quoth he, speak no more of that for the reuerence of God, for truely I am ashamed of my self, but what remedy now saue patience, and to learne to be wiser hérafter. What meanes all these paper Bokes (quoth our Hoste. Mary neighbour quoth Pierce they shalbe suretie vnto you for the repaiment of your fiue pound. With that they were vnbound, and béeing opened and loked vpon: they were Billes, Answers, Replications, Reionders Coppies of Depositions, and such like. Some out of one Court, some out of an other. When our Hoste had séen them all: why Neighbour (quoth hée) do you think to mét with any man that is so mad to lend v. pence vpon such trash? Trash Neighbour quoth Pierce they stand me in aboue fiftie pound. Peraduenture so quoth our Hoste, but that prooueth not that they are woorth fiftie points, sauing vnto him that were as mad to buy them of you: as you bought them at their hands that solde them vnto you. But or you mét with any such chapman: I beléeue you will be weary of kéeping them. With that Pierce began to be half offended. Neighbour Pierce quoth our Hoste, fiue pound is a small matter betwéen vs twain, you shall haue it vpon your woord. But as for your Bokes: hér dwelleth a Lady not far hence, carie them to her, for they are far fet and dér bought, and such things men say are good for Ladies.

¶ Pierce findeth it strange that men should pay so deer for things which in their hands are so vile and little woorth, as concerningtheir return.

Chap. 3.

NEighbour Simon (quoth Pierce) I can put vp that mock at your hands, for I knowe ye meane me no euil but good therby, but verily me thinketh it standeth hardly with their estimation that will be holden and termed worshipfull yea honorable, to take so extremly for things, wherof no better returne is to be made, yet must wee pay them with great attendaunce, with cap in hand and all reuerence. Great reason quoth our Hoste, for they are worshipfull, and right worthy of all those duties. Then haue I been in an errour a long time (quoth Pierce) for I haue alwaies hetherto thought that worship and honor had stood in geuing: & not in taking, in helping, releeuing and doing good: and not in their contraries, and this seemeth vnto mee both reasonable and also common experience, for we honor God at whose hands we receiue all goodnes, and therfore properly vnto him is all honor and worship due, and vnto men but so far forth as they approchen vnto God in qualitie of vertue, iustice, mercy and other goodnes, wherfore in all reason he ought to be moste honorable and worshipfull that doth the moste good, and vnto the greatest number, for surely in my discretion, the worship and the gaine ought to bee deuided, and he that gayneth, or is releeued, and is holpen: ought to honor and worship him by whom he gayneth, is holpen and releeued, for otherwise why doth the Seruant worship his Maister and not e conuerso. Neighbour Pierce quoth our Hoste, our honorable & reuerend forefathers with great wisdome and discretion, assessed these Fees and charges, and that for the great zeale and loue which they bare vnto Godlines and vertue, and to the persons quallified therwith.

With Pthat ierce clapped his hand vpon the bord. I make God a bow (quoth hee) whatsoeuer he was that first praised a sheet of paper with twelue lines written therin at eight pence, nay at xij. pence, for I am sure I haue CC. that cost me after that rate, he was neither frend to godlynes ne vertue, to God, neither to good man or woman. Neighbour Pierce quoth our Hoste, this is but the errour of your Iudgement,

and

and that shall appeare vnto you so euidently, that your self shall confesse that these fees and charges which you think so great and so excessiue had so great reason in their beginning as that greater had neuer any ciuil ordinance or cõstitution. Whether yée will regarde the honor and glory of God or the preseruation of the common Welth which cheefly dependeth therupon. That seemeth wunderfull strange vnto mée (quoth Pierce) that in such extreme taking and so small rendring there should lye hidden so great misery of good meaning and therfore gladly would I heare your reasons therupon. Very well Neighbour Pierce (quoth hée) then I will take in hand to proue it vnto you, which I trust I shall do sufficiently if I can proue these are no proper nor priuate gain or profit, but a publique and a common treasure to the ease and relief of the whole common welth and of the best and godliest Members of the same, yea verily (quoth Pierce) very well (quoth our Hoste.)

¶ Simon approoueth their great Fees and charges as things ment to be a reward and nurishment of Knowledge, Learning and Vertue, and punishment of vngodlines and vice, and therfore true and iust. Chap. 4.

FIrst I think yée wil graunt (quoth hée) that Maiestrates and Officers are the Deputies and Liuetenaunts of GOD heer in Earth, high and honorable, for that they are in very déed the hand and mouth of the Lawe, and in fewe and plain words the speaking and working Law, for by them the law commaundeth and forbiddeth So that their end and purpose is that God may be honored and glorified, good and godly People cherished, shortly that peace and concord may be maintained. I graunt you all this (quoth Pierce) you will graunt (quoth hée) that the way and meane to work all these things is to punish and chastice the wicked and the vngodly, and to giue as little fauour vnto sinne as is possible, that is very true also (quoth Pierce) Yée will graunt (quoth our Hoste) that the wayes and meanes to

punish

punish sinnes and wickednes are diuers, according to the qualitie of the offence, as some by death, some by other punnishment of the body greater or smaller. And that there is also a pecuniall punishment by the purse, as by fine and ransome, and such like. I graunt you all this (quoth Pierce). You will graunt me also (quoth hee) that all punishments are grœuous vnto the sufferers therof, neither are or ought to be pleasant vnto the doers and executors. That is very true also quoth Pierce, except they be wicked persons both the sufferer and the executor. Then quoth our Hoste, seeing all punishments are fearfull and grœuous vnto the sufferer therof, & no pleasure, but rather sorrowe and greef of hart vnto the executors therof, such and so must needs be the first causes and occasion therof. That is very true quoth Pierce. You know quoth our Hoste, that the causes and occasions of punishment is sin, wickednes and misgouernment of life, for the word of God telleth vs, that the reward of sinne is death. All that is very true quoth Pierce. Very well then quoth our Hoste, these Propositions which you haue graunted: do suffise for the matter which I haue taken in hand to proue, which is, that these great Fées and charges were neuer ment, nor yet are receiued or conuerted into priuat or proper vse. I pray you Neighbour quoth Pierce, let me heare how it is proued, for I promise you faithfully for any thing I haue yet heard: your proues are farther to fet.

You know quoth our Hoste, that the nature of the vngodly is to be quarelous and contencious, and dayly prouoking one an other, and also to take no wrong and do no right. That is very true quoth pierce. You know quoth our Hoste that the common weapon wherwith they wil be auẽged vpon eche other is the Law, which indœd is the Magistrate, as ye haue already graunted, so that vpon the matter: hée is made the executor of their wilfulnes and vengeaunce, which they will needs do vpon eche other, which thing you haue already confessed to be grœuous and vnpleasant to euery good man. Therfore hath it euer been, and yet is thought, and that very wisely and truely, that the likelyest way & meane to dissuade

their

their wilfulnes which no reason, loue nor feare of GOD could diſſwade was to make their wilfulnes as déere and as heauy vnto them as reaſonably might be doon, to the end that they ſhould not ſo lightly and for euery trifle vex and trouble both the Magiſtrate & one an other, which effect although it failed to worke, & that their madnes would not be reſtrayned therby: that yet their vngodlynes might return to the profit and releéſe of others their neighbours & Brethern that were better affected, & ſo by one ſelfe and ſame mean: the vngodly puniſhed & fleéced, and the godly amended & inriched therby, & that this was their meaning ý was the firſt aſſellors therof: common experience teacheth vs, for in néedfull and neceſſary actions, as debt, detinew, and account and ſuch like: the charges are ſo reaſonable, as that no man would in conſcience giue leſſe.

The reaſon is, for that they are actions of common right, and ſuch as muſt néeds day by day ariſe betweén a man and his Brother, neither doo they diſhoneſt either of the parties which I dare not affirme vpon actions vpon caſes, neither did they ſo iudge of them, as I verily beléeue, and therfore did they ſet double and treble charges thereupon, for greater is the charges in a brabble for a word ſpoken: then for thrée hundred pound of honeſt debt.

So that the Magiſtrate, who for ſuch Ale-houſe actions and brabbles: ſhould otherwiſe neuer be at reſt, except he ſhould deny them his help, which might be ſlaunderous and perillous to the whole eſtate.

The Magiſtrate I ſay of pure pittie and compaſſion, was forced to ſet great charges vpon them, for the ſmall fauour that he bare vnto them, & vnto their firſt cauſes & occaſions.

The greatnes of all which charges not withſtanding, yet doo we dayly ſée how the vngodly run togither by heaps like brute beaſts, and yet I dare ſafely ſay, that by the greatnes of theſe charges, and the terrour therof: many a brabling matter hath béen and is dayly put vp without any reuenge ſought therof, and many a one hauing purſued and recouered in his action, yet haue his charges ſo galled him: that

he hath bẽn easier to deale with all his life after. And so by this meane many a wilfull body brought to knowe him self: and to honor God therby.

I cannot tell Neighbour Simon quoth Pierce, but I my self haue had two or thrée brabbles that haue kept me doing these seuen yéeres, in which time I am suer I haue spent aboue fiftie pound, beside my charges to and fro, losse of time, and my hinderance at home. And what haue ye gotten for all this quoth our Hoste? These papers quoth he. Wel worth fiftie points quoth our hoste. I think verily quoth our Hoste if any honest Neighbour had néeded to haue borowed ten pound therof: you would not haue it so ready to haue pleasured him withall. If I should say truely (quoth Pierce) I think the very same. What are you assessed vnto the poore in your Parish quoth our Hoste? A peny a wéek quoth Pierce. And think you that enough quoth our Hoste? Yea verily quoth Pierce. Loe Sir quoth our Hoste, whether commeth this vnto my saying and maintenaunce of these great Fées and charges or not? Who can deny the excellency of this institution? wherby the Couetuous and vngodly men are shot one against an other, and do punish eche other, and wherby also so plentiful prouision is made for the godly poore at their charges, and yet no thank to them therfore, and that those things from the which they would depart vnto any Honest or godly vse or purpose, with as good will as from their eyes to be plucked out of their heads, or their tripes out of their bellyes, by this meane vndesired of their owne accord, they bring it in by handfuls, and so as it hath bẽn said, plentiful prouision made for their godly Neighbours at their charges and yet no thank vnto them therfore.

Call you this a prouiding for the poore? Neighbour (quoth Peirce) I would I had giuen you the best horse in my Plough to make this saying true, and I sweare to you (quoth he) proue it true: and you shall haue him yet or this day Seuen night, for that would ease my hart if I might perceiue that any godly person hath fared the better or were amended by any parte of all my great expences. For then yet should I

think

think that I haue done some good with all the losse of my mo ney. Why Neighbour Pierce (quoth Simon) do you doubt that all these summes or the greatest part therof: commeth not to the vse of the common wealth, and to the releese and sustenance of the godly poore, and other easements of com mon things in maintenaunce of the common Wealth: Nay Neighbour Simon (quoth he) I doubt it not, for I am fully perswaded the contrary. Truely Neighbour Pierce (quoth he) this is an vncharitable and a very erroneous oppinion, and that I will proue vnto you by reasons manifest and ap parant, and such as your self haue alredy graunted & confessed. I pray you neighbour Simon (quoth Pierce) let me heare how.

¶ Simon approoueth these fees and charges as publique and not priuat, by argument taken from effects vnto their causes.

Chap. 5.

WHosoeuer he be that Coueteth priuately to gaine and profit by any thing (quoth our Hoste) coueteth the thing wherby he gay neth and profiteth, this is so true (quoth he) that I will not desire you to graunt it vnto me, for it is a necessary argument from the effect vnto the cause, and therfore if ye wil affirm that the Magistrate and officer coueteth these great fées and charges and priuately to thriue and war rich therby: you must neces sarily conclude, that he fauoureth all the first & mean causes therof, which were a horrible & a fearfull conclusion, & yet as I haue said followeth necessarily vpon ỹ premises graunted & therfore is couetise so much more odious & detestable in a Magistrate then in a common person, for couetise as he excéd eth all other vices simply considered: euen so respectiuely he excéedeth him self, I say respectiuely to wit, qualified by the person in whome he dwelleth, for in a priuat person: he is but a priuat sin, & extendeth vnto his P. only, but in a Magistrate he is a publique and general corruptiõ of al ỹ people, for ther's no coueto⁹ person bẽing but a priuate man or womã ỹ wish eth any other to be such as they thẽ selues are, the reason is, for that the Couetise of others: is nothing whereby they

shoulde gayne or be aduaunced, but rather lose therby. Therfore could they be content that there were few or no others such as they are, wherby it apeereth that couetise in a priuate Person neither worketh nor wisheth any general corruption and yet fulfilleth the talent and habit of his subiect and so much the more. The very same is to be said of all other vices in all other persons without exception of degree, as Whordome, Pride, Gluttony, Drunkennes and all other excesse in voluptuous pleasure, in al which things what soeuer hath or euer had the greatest felicitie & enioyed moste therof: yet would they not that others did the like, or at the least no more then they themselues muste necessarily vse for the accomplishment of their pleasures which requireth some company. The reason is already shewed, to wit for the other Folkes pleasures are not their pleasures, neither do increase the same, but rather their paines and misery.

For the hunger, scarcitie and want of others giueth a good taste and sauour vnto the voluptuousnes and pleasures of the vngodly, and therfore could they be very wel content to enioy their owne wickednes thẽ selues, for pleasure haue they none nor gain in the lewdnes or the misgouernaũce of other. And if they had: yet want they power to corrupt others therby otherwise then by example which can not do much in any one priuate man or woman, for that they haue but the leading of their owne liues. But of Couetise in the Magistrate it is otherwise, for hée hath the leading and the fourming of other mens liues and therfore differeth from the cõmon and priuate person both concerning his wil and also concerning his habilitie and power to execute the same.

¶ First concerning desire and will: hée cannot wish that the common people should be godly and vertuous, for neither standeth his great gain, nor his Ambition therin, for why they are two things incompacible and contrary.

Then concerning his power to execute his wil and desire: it is so great and so mighty that the olde Prouerbs hath not doubted to call the common People the Image of their Magistrates and officers for as certainly as this antecedent.

The

The man eateth and drinketh inferreth this consequent the man is a liue: euen so certainly this proposition the Magistrates and officers are couetous inferreth this cõclusion.

The People are vngratious and vngodly. The reason is peremptory for the Magistrate and Officer hath the Bridle rain in his hand either to giue libertie vnto vngodlynes and dissolution of life: or els to refrain the same.

Now all men may dayly see by proof that there is no wilde Beast so very brute and barbarous as man will war and bée through libertie and that for the excellency of his nature aboue all other Creatures and his great vnderstanding in good and euil.

¶ And therfore to admit in a Magistrate a couetise and a desire of priuate and proper gain, Namely by fées and charges arising and growing is as alredy confessed, these were to conclude an odious and detestable Consequence against ỹ Magistrate and Officer of whome wée are forbidden by God to speak or think saue all honor and reuerence.

¶ Wherfore I say it standeth not with the reuerence and honourable opinion that wée are bound to haue of the Magistrate to say or to think that these great gaines & fées do return to him in priuate and proper vse: but rather to Judge & think that the Magistrate & Officer receiueth them as things excommunicate and as a common Treasure dedicated vnto godly vses and purposes in ease and relief of the whole common wealth.

¶ Would God this were true quoth Pierce, for I dare lay my life (quoth hée) that if all the summes of money that are leudly and shamefully spent in one Terme about vain sutes and brabbles were reserued and accounted in the end of ỹ Term: they would amount to more then all the Collection for the Powre through out all the parishes in England for half a yéer neuertheless many a one thinketh him selfe sore charged, namely my selfe God forgiue mée.

Truely Neighbour (quoth our Hoast) I am of no other Opinion, neither do I Judge that all these great Fées and Reuenewes are any other thing but a Collection for the pur

poſes and intents aforeſaid, neither that the receiuers of the ſame doo differ frõ thoſe other Collectors in pariſh Churches ſauing in the greatnes of their receit and alſo ſauing that they are not forced to craue it at the parties hands and ſome time to conuent him before a Iuſticer of peace for a grote or ſix pence as the others oft times are. And alſo ſauing that for their reuerend and honorable eſtemation they are not accoũtable. Sauing vnto the Lord God the Author generall and vnto their owne Conſciences.

¶ Pierce denyeth the reaſons alleaged as probable but not neceſſary. His reaſons therfore.

Chap. 6.

NEighbour Simon quoth Pierce you haue alleaged many fair and coulorable propoſitiõs and concluſions and haue gone about mée võ this reaſon and with that.

I am no Schoole man, Neighbour quoth hée, but yet ſome reaſon I haue and ſome experience I haue ſéen, and ſome héed I haue taken thereof, wherfore if you wil giue mée leaue to anſwere you: you ſhall hear mée as probably diſproue theſe your allegations as you proued them, for I ſhall proue all your propoſitions are probable and not neceſſary, neither doo inferre a neceſſary concluſion as you haue pretended. For the better doing wherof: firſt for orders ſake, I wil rehearſe your propoſitions, reaſons and arguments, wherof the firſt is, that the Magiſtrate and Officer is to be had in all honor and reuerence becauſe hée is the Law which is moſte honorable and reuerend, this I confeſſe as an vndoubted trueth, namely for that the end aſwel of the one as of the other, is that God may be honored and glorified, godly People cheriſhed, and maintains peace and concord ſtrengthned and furthered, wherupon ſtandeth the proſperitie & the good eſtate of all Cuntries and common welths, their wayes and meanes you haue alleaged are theſe.

To puniſh and chaſtice the wicked and the vngodly, and to reſtraine their libertie as much as is poſſible. Yée haue further alleaged that punihments are diuers, ſome corporall, ſome

some pecuniall, and that all punishments are grœuous bothe vnto the sufferers, and also vnto the doers therof, but that I wil not graunt ye without distinction.

Very true it is that all punishments without exception, are grœuous vnto the sufferers therof, but vnto the executor therof: they are not all so, namely such as are pecuniall and tho gaine therof returning vnto the executor. For although that to beat, burn, hang or whip any creature of God, namely a Christian man or woman: is an odious thing, & wherin no good or Godly hart can haue pleasure: yet for aduauntage sake it is often otherwise, for otherwise there would not so many Oxen, Sheep and Calues be murthered, and so few Hogs, Dogges or Cats, their offences beeing only their good flesh.

Wherfore, although that in all Godly reason your arguments haue great necessitie: yet in humaine reason and experience it hath but bare probabilitie and is no more. But as if for example you wil say Women ought to be ashamed to be seen bibbing wine in common Tauernes, or to be seen at common lasciuious and bawdie Stage Playes: therfore they are ashamed therof.

This is an argument gathered from posse to esse, to wit, from should or ought to be, to is simply, and hath not any necessitie nor firmitie, and that shall you see if you will goe with me to London this next Terme.

How be it, you seem to inforce your antecedent, by the honorable estimation wherin I am bound to haue the Magistrate and Officer, and therby you think that of dutie I ought to graunt it you for the shamefull consequence whiche necessarily ensueth vpon the deniall therof.

Truely that not withstanding, me thinketh all this but a very bare and naked prowf.

¶ Simon maintaineth his assertion by authoritie of holy Scripture and diuersitie taken between the reward of Vertue, Learning and Knowledge and the hire of seruile trauaile and labour.

Cap. 7.

CAll you this a bare and naked proof Neighbour Pierce quoth our Hoast, if you denye this proof (quoth hée) you reuerse & ouerthrow all humain societie which is maintained and vpholden by giuing vnto God ỳ which is due vnto God, and vnto man ỳ which is due vnto man. But vnto God what can wée giue saue honor, praise & glory, first and immediatly vnto him self, and secondly vnto his Deputies and Lieutenants, to wit, Magistrates & Officers whose calling and appointing therunto as it is of God: so must and ought wée to think that it is for their godlynes and vertues, for God him selfe hath said them that honor me I will honor, and they that dishonour mée I wil dishonour, wherfore our wise and reuerend Elders and Forefathers in their assessing these great fées and charges: did mean to honor them whome God honoured. And therfore vnto their callings appoited they great and honorable reuenues, knowing that their gain is the punishment of vice and the rewarde of Vertue, and that the part & portion of all the godly is therin, knowing also that there is not so great Incouragement vnto Vertue and Godlynes: as the liberall rewarde therof, and that all vngodlynes and vnthankfulnes is measured by the greatnes of thy gwdnes and benefit receiued either at ỳ hãds of God or man. Lastly knowing that they might not prosecute but persecute the causes & occasiõs of these gains as hath alre dy bẽn proued, and therfore I say aboue all common reason and discretion they assessed these Fées and reuenues that the gains might be great and yet the causes therof few, quite contrarie to all other estates and faculties, for what other reason is there that one man shall labour sore a whole day & at night shall receiue twelue pence or eight pẽce for his hire: An other for half or a quarter of an houres easie trauail shall

receiue

receiue xx. shillings or sometime more, what is the cause of this diuersitie: euen this, the one is a hire and a price of a seruile labour and trauell, and is receiued in proper and priuat vse, the other is an honor donne vnto vertue, Godlynes and knowledge: which do receiue nor holde, or account any so base things proper or priuate, or can be so basely minded, as to ioy therin, further then they may glorify God therby.

What other reason is there, that one man in the returne of a Reame of paper, shall gaine xij. pence or xvi. pence cléer, and yet where he layd out ij. pence: the other laid out x. shillings And after the same rate in War, that one man shall sell more for vi. pence: then an other shall sell for viij. pound, which neuertheleſſe bought as déer as he, within xij. pence at xx. shillings waring, and both laid out more money, & longer loked for the return therof. I say there is no reason other then is already made.

¶ Pierce denyeth the calling to office, to be such as Simon hath alleaged.

Cap. 8.

NEighbour Simon (quoth Pierce) wheras you maintaine your asserſion by the worthines of the Magiſtrate and Officer, and do inſiſt therupon, alledging that they are called by God, and that for their godlines and vertue. The firſt part I greatly dout, for that many of them buy their offices, and pay very déerly therfore, yea some ſell their very inheritaunces for that purpoſe, I mean to buy offices, now did I neuer read that euer God receiued Money for an office, how be it I referre my ſelf hérin to my Maiſters that are learned.

The next part that they are called for their Vertue and Godlines, ſurely then I verily ſuppoſe ſome of them are called for the things that neuer were in them before, and then were the caller deceiued, which God cannot be, except you will ſay that God of his méere goodnes and mercy called them

for the vertues and godlynes which he meaneth to call them vnto, and in this order beginneth to worke, I meane in bestowing vpon thē so liberally, and by that meanes to charge them with his expectation, in respect of their great Tallent committed vnto them, which thing you seem to alledge, as no small cause and consideration of the high assessing of the fées and charges aforesaid, and that so great mercies & graces bestowed vpon them by God, and so liberall reward appointed vnto them by men: should suffise to make them godly and vertuous from thence forth: what so euer they were or had bēn before. All which arguments, although they be godly and probable: yet as I said before they stand doubtful, for the olde Prouerb, Honors chaunge manners. I beléeue the godly and the learned do dout whether it be taken in the better part, or in the worse, for I am very sure, that many are worse disposed, and much more vngodly in high and honorable calling: then while they were in meane estate and degrée.

Neighboure Pierce (quoth our Hoste) there is no rule so generall, that it admitteth not exception, albeit I dout not nor euer did, that honours chaunge manners, is and euer was meant in the better parte. For the wiseman saith. He that is vngodly in welth: how much more vngodly would he be in pouertie? The examples are many that do proue that honors chaunge men to the better, namely of Saule, of whome it is said that béeing called from a simple boy after his Inauguration: he felt him selfe suddainly chaunged, and as the book saith: he felt a new hart in him.

The like example we haue of many Kings and Prophets in the Scripture. But to come néerer, both for the time and also the place, in our English History we read of that noble King H. the fifth, who in his Fathers life was of euil gouernment, and kept company with riotors and vnthrifts, so that there was small hope of him, but after the death of H. fourth, when this yung man was placed in his kingdom: he sent for all his olde companions, who were not a little glad therof, but when they weare come into his presence: he sharply rebuked them, and giuing them small rewards, yet

better

better then he thought them worthy, he forbad them during their liues to come within ry. miles of the Court, and that vpon great penaltie. All these examples do manifestly proue that liberall reward of vertue, and high and Honorable calling do increase vertue in them in whome it is alredy, and causeth them in whom it is not saue only in apparaunce, yet for pure shame to imbrace it, seeing that otherwise hot coales are heaped vpon their heads, through their shameleste vnthankfulnes vnto them that haue so thorowly prouoked them with the greatnes of their benefits.

And therfore against all these reasons and proofs, to say that the Magistrate and Officer should priuatly Couet and conuert so great summes of treasure: it were to shamefull and slaunderous, considered that they are the effects of so euill causes as hath already bèen shewed And considered also the horrible and wicked conclusion that would ensue therupon, as also hath already bèn proued.

Neighbour Simon (quoth Pierce) neuer tel me what might or doth insue therupon: but consider the trueth and the matter as it is indéd. And if these great fées and charges do not come vnto their receiuers and takers in proper and priuate: what meane they to make so great labour, sute, frendship and cost to get those offices and callings. And how commeth it to passe that by the meanes of such offices: such as before were of small habilitie, come to purchase a Barons liuing, yea twaine or thrée. Shortly, that their care is greater to heare and learne where any Land or Lordship is to be solde: then for the Money wherwith to purchase the same.

¶ Simon confirmeth his assertion touching the desire to beare office to be good, by the Ettimologia an exposition of the woord (Officium)

Cap. 9.

NEighbour Pierce (quoth our Hoast) all these matters are easely deuided, vnto the which thus I answere. To the first which is their great desire to be in such Offices of receit, I say you mis-iudge of their desire because you do not vnderstand the meaning of this word Office and do think him to be an Englishman wheras in very deed his Father is an Italian, whose proper signification and meaning you do not vnderstand, for in our English tung Office is no more to say nor nothing els but Seruice, so that whosoeuer desireth an Office hée desireth to do seruice or els a place wherin to do seruice, now all men knowe that a priuate man is not able to compare with the Magistrate or Officer in abilitie and power. Therfore to desire an Office is to desire to be better abled, to expresse and declare the hartie good wil and affection which hée hath to bée seruiceable vnto God and his common welth, for that in priuat estate his power answerethnot vnto his good wil therin, and therfore the better man the more desirous to be in Office and in the more Offices, for the greater is his power to shew his good affection towards God who is the Giuer of all these things.

¶ Neighbour Simon quoth Pierce, I connot tel what Cuntrie mans Office is, neither do I greatly force whether his Father be an Italian, Spaniard or Frenchman, but if he be the same in Latin that seruice is in English: I am suer that both in Latin, French, Spanish and English hée stinketh when he is to freely offered, and that (I am very sure) did Aesop mean in his Fable of the Sowe great with pig vnto whome (saith hée) there came a Fox who alleadging vnto her his great skil in the art of a Midwife proffered her his seruice toward her deliuerance, vnto whome she answered, that the greatest and best seruice that he could do vnto her, was to kéep him far inough from her, which shée also praied him to do, wherby you may gather what the Authors opinion was vpō this voluntary offer of seruice and yet hée doth not alleadge that the Fox offered any money, I suppose because hée had no money to offer. But Simon Magus offered money in ỹ Acts of ỹ

Apostles

Apostles, and what the holy Ghost thought therof: you may there vnderstand. Neighbour Pierce quoth our Hoast this is a colde reason and no Argument, to say that a mans earnest desire to haue an Office argueth his desire of priuate gaine & profit, and so for his great desire to do good: condemne him of euil without prof therof. Neighboure Simon (quoth Pierce) I do not so barely reason, neither so nakedly as you haue alleaged if you did mée right in repetition of my Argument, not intercepting the same nor seuering the partes therof as you haue don, and so haue answered the first part by it self which is the weakest and haue said nothing to the second part which is their great purchase and the strength & effect of the first, for my Argument taken wholy togither is thus much to say, that their great desire to haue the Offices, and their great purchase of Landes and liuing following the same: sheweth that from the beginning there was ment nought els but priuate pouching, for euer the act that is last in execution: is the first in Imaginatiõ in all mens doings this is moste assured. Neighbour (quoth our Hoast) this Argument of yours which you holde so forcible is of no force at all whether the parties therof be considered ioyntly or seuerally neither doth this great desire to be in Office, neither ỳ great purchase ensuing the same in any wise disproue my first Assertion and maintenaunce of this great reuenues, fees and charges as you suppose, construing and taking my saying to nére vnto the letter. For wheras I haue alleaged the Magistrates and Officers to be the Patrons and Fathers of the common welth, and these great reuenues a publique treasure in their hands to the vses and intents aboue rehersed: yée alleadge against mée their great purchase of Lordships, Lands and Liuings as a repugnancie and dispraise therof, which it is not but the greatest & strongest confirmation ther of that I my self haue alleaged, for although I haue made them receiuers: yet haue I not charged them mérly as Receiuers, but as baylifs & Gardens of trust whose authoritie extendeth to improue for ỳ benefit of their Cuntries. But a better Improuement can there not be made, then by altring of money which is transitory: into land which is per-

manent, namely beeing deliuered vnto them at their yéers of discretion vpon the account of their said Bailifs or gardēs. And euen as it fareth betweén the Garden and his pupil, ỹ Bailifs and him to whose vse he is put in trust. So fareth it betweén these Magistrates and Officers and the common welth as touching these receits.

And therfore these purchases of lands and possessions the best and moste allowable discharge vpon their account that can possible be made vnto God, the greatest and highest aduaūcement of his honour and glory, the greatest and moste assured comfort and stay of his godly people and seruants vnto whōe the payment of the money from hand to hand had been but a temporall and a short releef, for euery man hath not the gouernment ne right vse therof, so slipper is it and fugitiue.

But these Lands in the hands of these Landlords are a stay perpetuall and permanent wherunto the godly and honest person is sure of preferment and that for reason for why the Owners are such in whome is no acceptaunce of Worshiip, Frēendship, or of the greater offer, neither of other thig then vertue and godlines, and therfore their rent must néeds be easie, for who should rate it by out bidding when the vngodly is no chapman neither dare preset him self in the place for the godly person doth it, no not vnto the wicked, much lesse vnto his godly Brother or Neighbour. This is no small commendation of Vertue and godlines and no small encouragement therto, namely where a man may make as suer & a more sure account of his Farme: then some other can make of their inheritaunce and patrimony. which thing although it seem straunge: yet is it commonly verified in the Farmers of such Landlords. For wée see to often that diuers honest and godly Men leaue their Inheritaunce vnto vngodly and vnthriftie Children (who falling into the hands of th'executor) doo little while inioy the same. The cause wherof is for that they came to their lands before they came to their Wit, and beeing Owners ware therby proude and in flatte beeing vnder no mans check and disdainning al mens counsel and so forgetting God and them selues fall to folly and then (as the Prophet Dauid saith) Their table is made a snare to take them

and the things which ſhould haue been for their proffit, are vnto them an occaſion of falling. So fearfull and daunge-rous is the ſinguler and ſole proprietie of great Landes and poſſeſſions, as that oftentimes it not only bereaueth the ow-ners of their right wit and Judgemẽts: but alſo through their pride, vnthriftines and prodigallitie it hazardeth the ſincere adminiſtration & execution of lawes and Juſtice, procuring partialitie and fauour to vngodlynes and diſſolute liuing, whilſte they (whoſe dutie were to rebuke ſuch perſons and to reſtraine their libertie) had rather enter into their large re-uenues and poſſeſſions and to take and vſe the opportunitie of their wickednes and retchleſnes as the meeteſt occaſion hœrto. But in theſe Farmers and in their poſteritie other-wiſe it is and that for the reuerend and honourable regarde betweẽ them and their Landlords at whoſe hands and du-ring whoſe good will and pleaſure they holde their liuings and whoſe great liberalitie and benignitie chargeth them with no ſmall expectation aſwel of godly and honeſt conuerſation of life, as alſo of hoſpitalitie and charitable dealig with their Bretheren and Neighbours beeing by their meanes very wel enabled therunto. Theſe things (I ſay) are loked for at their hands and that by them whoſe expectation they dare not nor cannot without great ſhame falſifie, which godly-nes, thriftines and liberallitie in them is of no ſmall force to moue others therunto, and ſo mutuall loue and charity che-riſhed betweẽ euery degrée, & where theſe things are, God hath promiſed to bleſſe that houſe, Town, Cittie or Cuntry.

It can hardly be ſpoken and much hardlyer written how greatly and how mightely this procureth and aduaunceth Learning, Godlynes and Vertue, how much it furthereth the deſire of contemplation and godly exerciſes of the minde, againſt which there is no Impediment nor hinderaunce ſo great as either the deſtitution or want of a competent liuing and maintenaunce, or els the dayly feare to be ſupplanted or diſappointed therof, and conſequently the thoughts and cares either to prouide for a competent liuing or els to maintaine and defend the ſame againſt the dayly Allarms and aſſaults of the Couetous and the vngodly againſt which the benignitie

tie and goodnes of Diuners and Landlords is the greatest yea the only protection. These are the effects and frutes of these purchases alleadged by you to be made by ỹ gains, fees and reuenues aforesaid which dow far differ from the common purchasing of other priuate persons by whome (through your Ignorannce or els of malice) you dow Judge & measure these which are nothing like nor comparable, as the effects and frutes therof will euidently declare, namely in the purchase of the Merchant, the Chapman, the Grasier, the clothier and such other like Artificer what soeuer, at ỹ hands of all which persõs no such thing is hoped or looked for. First for that they dow not sustaine any such charge of expectation, neither is any reason that they should, except a Shoomaker bying an Oxe hide for three shillings & foure pẽce, might sel shoes for twentie shillings a paire: for that would alter the case. Therfore as his calling is base and mean: so is his iudgement as touching Vertue and ỹ Felicitie and end of mans life, which hee Judgeth to consist in getting and hauing, for that hee se'th men accounted and esteemed therafter, and other or farther Contemplation hath hee very little or none. So that in his Oppinion hee spedeth his matters wunderfull wel if hee return his Chaffer to his gain, & the more and greater: so much the better, be it land or lease of Farme or house, if he can sel it again for duble or treble that it cost him or let it for three times the rent that hee payeth him self for it. All this hee accounteth honest gain and very wisely handled, so that when he hath any thing to let or set, vp goeth the Drum & as welcome to him the Deuil of hel, yea Belzabub him selfe as the Godlyest person in England, yea as an Angell of heauen, for godlynes, vertue or honestie is the last question that hee wil aske, only Quid vultis mihi dare? Thus is the godly person sure to be put back or els to take the thing to his vtter detriment, so that vpon the matter no question or difference whether of them speed, for the euil man is made a great deale wurse, namely for that the greatnes of his rent stoppeth the mouth of him whose rebuke hee should moste feare & whome hee would and should moste reuerence and regarde, and therfore wil hee be as wicked and as vngratious and corrupt as

many

many others as hée can and dare for feare of the lawes. The godly person although he gladly would do good: yet wanteth hée power therto being ouer set with the greatnes of his rēt, so that in conclusion whether the good or euil may spéed: they are forced to deale hardly with the world wherby ariseth little or no amitie, frendship or charitable loue, among men, but euen all for the peny as among meer Straungers nor any zeale vnto God nor to do any good for his sake.

By all these arguments, it appéareth manifestly how much it were to be wished and desired at the hands of Almightie God that only or chéefly such were purchasers & Land-lords whose very estates and callings and the manner of the getting of their gaines wherwith they purchase do charge them with a reuerend and fatherly regarde in letting and setting the same to the honor and glory of God who hath so mightely blessed them, yea so far aboue all that they euer could without shame haue wished or desired, so heaping hot coales vpon their heads in their vnthankfulnes and dealing otherwise, which (as I haue alredy said) is not or at the least not so greatly to be hoped or looked for at their hands of base and meane calling. And therfore Neighbour Pierce (quoth hée) admitting and confessing the greatnes of their purchase: yet can yée not conclude against mée the proper or priuate receit or imploying of Charges, fées and reuenues aforesaid neither will I graunt it vnto you for the slaunderous and shamefull consequente which it inferreth necessarily as hath already been duly proued.

‡ Pierce repeateth the Reasons and Arguments of Simon and confuteth them by proof and expecience demonstratiue, as frō the cause to the effect and that vpon his owne knowledge.

Cap. 10.

Neighbour Simon (quoth Pierce) yée haue made as your self doth suppose many strong reasõs & conclusiõs to approue ỹ first assessing and ỹ now receiuing of eight pence or twelue pence for a sheet of paper, and other excessiue and vnreasonable fées and charges of sutes as not only tollerable, iust and reasonable: but also godly and moste conducible vnto the common welth, and to the prosperous and good estaste therof, namely for that these fées and charges were ment and yet are the punishment of vice and the reward of godlynes and vertue. And also that they were and yet are ment a publique treasure in the hands of the receiuers therof, to all godly vses, intents and purposes.

Wherunto I answered, alleadging the great purchase of Lands and Lordships by the receiuers of the same as a thing repugnant and contrary to your Assertion, wherunto you haue replied that their great purchase is not only contrary to your first Assertion: but a confirmation of the same.

For you say that their porchase of lands is a prouision without comparison more assured and permanent then were or could haue béen the distribution of the money or any parte therof from hand to hand, and also that the effects and fruits therof are moe and greater and do stretch farther and more generally and vniuersally do procure the honor and glory of God, and the publique welth, peace and quietnes.

To proue that these things are so: you haue alleadged the honorable calling of the Magistrate and Officer, and ỹ great expectation that hée sustaineth both before God and men, and also the reuerend opinion that we are bound to haue of him. Yée haue also alleadged that the first causes of all these great gaines and proffits are such as of duty he is bound to persecute and not to prosecute, namely for that they are vngodlynes, wickednes and all kinde of vice, by the gain wherof (say you) no honest nor godly person can without great shame thriue and wax rich, much lesse the Magistrate and Officer vpõ whose great expectation hérin you do so greatly insist.

Truely Neighbour (quoth hée) all these are godly and also godly reasons and do very wel proue how things either

haue

haue bẽn or els how things ought to be.

But that they are so presently: these are either no proues at all or very small and so your argument gathered and concluded from posse to esse as I haue said already, and as I wil further proue by Arguments gathered from the cause vnto the effect and from the effect vnto the cause euen the very same that you haue alleadged, tying them together in the same maner and fourme as your selfe haue alleadged them.

First you say that the originall cause of these great gains, Fées and reuenues was the hate that the first Assessors therof bare vnto vngodlines, wickednes and all kinde of vice, the fauour and good affection which they bare vnto Vertue, and godlynes, and therin they ment the punishment of the one and the preferment and aduancement of the other, and so you conclude lewdnes, vnthriftines and vngodlynes to haue bẽn and yet stil to be the first cause of these great gains, Fées and reuenues, and these great Fées and reuenues their effect, the effect of these fées, profits and reue nues yée haue alleadged or rather I my self haue alleadged, and you haue confessed and iustified to be the great perquisition and purchase of Lordships, lands and possessions by the Magistrates and Officers Receiuers of the same.

The effect of their great purchase is by you alleadged to be a prouision, a stay of liuing and patry mony for the Godly and honest People of the common welth, and for their assurance, peace and quietnes. The effect of so good a prouision for the Godly: you haue alleadged to be the increase of them, and the decrease of the wicked, vnthriftie and vngodly, the effect of the increase of godly people you haue alleadged to be mutuall loue & charitie and all good affection both towards God and also one to an other, the effect wherof you haue alleadged to be the manifolde blessings of God according to the saying of the Prophet in the hundred thrée & thirtie Psalme.

Thus haue you argued from the first causes producing their effects, and from those effects as from causes of their effects very orderly and very probable, but not necessarilye as I haue already alleadged: and as I doubt not hereafter

I shall prowe vnto you so directly and so euidently that you shall either confesse your owne prowes fallible and false: or els you must and shal say that causes produce no effects or els clean contrary effects, which is to reuerse and to ouerthrowe the order of Nature and all the law and rule of reason as to say there can be a Father or a mother without a Sonne or a Daughter or that betwéen a man or a woman there should be begotten a dogge or a cat. And for proof heerof I wil aleage bothe reason as strong as you haue alleaged any: and also mine owne experience which I my self haue déerly bought and paid for. I pray you Neighbour let mée héer that (quoth our Hoast)

¶ Pierce Plowmans first tale for that purpose where he sheweth how his Neighbour and hee went to the Tauern and to the daunsing Schoole and what happned there.

Chap. 12.

AT my being in London this last term (quoth Pierce) it fortuned one afternoone hauig little or nothig to do, as God knoweth what Idlenes & vngodlines commeth of our idle waitig & attending vpon our dayes of hearig as they terme them, when in the mean time we run vp and down in the stréets, and if happely wee mét with any Frend or acquaintaunce: it is holden great humanitie to offer him the curtesie of Londō, which is as much to say to haue him to the Tauern & there to sit bibbing vntil neither of thē can scant finde the way forth again. So as I was about to tel you, one day amongst all others wée met a company of Neighbours and Frends together in Poules, six in number all Cuntrie-men and Neighbours, saue one that was a Londoner a Neighbour borne of ours, who was our Leader to many a good place dout you not, so on Gods name néeds wée must to the Tauern, and so wée went to the Tauern, there fast by, wherby that time we came forth again our heds were better laden with heare then with Wit, so on Gods name when

when our heds were wel fraughted: wée must néeds go to sée some pleasures of the Cittie that were straunge and noueltie vnto vs of the Cuntrie, and so on Gods name wée went into a dauncing Schoole not very far thence, now was there one man of our Company that was as deaf as a doze naile.

¶ When wée weare come into the Schoole: the Musitions were playing and one dauncing of a Galiard; and euen at our entring hée was beginning a trick as I remember of sixtéens oz seuentéens, I dw not very wel remẽber but wunderfully hée leaped, flung and tok on, which the deaf man beholding, and not hearing any noyse of the Musick, thought verily that hée had béen stark mad and out of his wit, and of pure pittie and compassion ran to him and caught him in his armes and held him hard and fast. The Dauncer not knowing his gwd meaning and taking it to the wurst, and hauing a Dagger drew it out and smot the man a great blowe vpon the hed, and brake his hed very sore.

The man sore mœued and grœued therewithall, and bée ing a man of great strength: threw him from him with all his strength among the Musitiõs, and hée lighting vpon one of the greatest and faireſt Vialls, brake it all in péeces.

Therwithal vp start the Musitions for him and we for to help the other béeing our Frends and Neighbours, and then went out Daggers, vp went Pantofles, al the rest of the Instruments in the throng were all to trodden and broken, and but that Neighbours hearing the noise and bustlig came in and parted vs: surely some of vs had béen in great daunger to haue béen slain.

I lost my Cloake and had my hed broken and so had thrée of my Neighbours moe, and hardly the Musitions and their partakers went not scotfrée. But shortly to end and come to my purpose: you shall heare what followed.

First and formoste wée were all arrested and committed to Prison for a fraie and bloodshed, where I think you may make no question if it cost vs any thing before wée gat out again. But hauing paid our Fées there, and thinking verily that the wurst had béen past: euen at our comming forth from thence wée were all newly arrested by latitates and re

remained vntil wée had put in Sureties to appéer at the day of the return of the writ in the Kings bench. So wée laid our purses togither and went to a worshipful and learned Lawyer that had béen of our counsaile aforetime, and shewed him the declarations that were against vs, wherof the first was at the sute of the Owner of the schoole, wherin hée alleadged that with force and armes wee had entred into his house and beaten, wounded and euil intreated his Seruants, by reason wherof he had lost their seruice by the space of eight dayes, to his hinderaunce and damage six pound, and also then and their thée Instruments of Musick commonly called Vialls did spoile and breake to his losse and hinderaunce six pound.

Besides this, euery of his Seruants the parties thẽ selues seuerally declared against vs all ioyntly of an assault and battery made vpon them, and that wée had beaten, wounded and euil intreated them to their seuerall damages fortipence, the Dauncer himself declared seuerally against the deaf man for assaults and battery, vpon all which matters wée praied his counsel and aduice, his answer was shortly that in his opinion the law was against vs in all and euery of our cases wher of he gaue vs the causes & reasons as I shal reherse vnto you.

To the first point of the first declaration for forcible entry wée praied his reason, how or by what reason our entrie might be said forcible séeing the doores were open, and if they had béen shut our cõming in was but to hear & sée, & our meaning not hurtfull to any man. His answere therunto was that a mans meaning that commeth into my house shalbe cõstrued and taken to haue béen such from the beginning as is his act there don after he is entred, for ỹ shalbe taken for his meaning & the declaration therof, namely where hée entreth wõut special commaundemẽt or licẽce of the party, & because (saith hée) that after your entry into ỹ house yée did there cõmit a force & vnlawful act: therfore your first entry and comming into the house shalbe déemed & iudged vnlawful & forcible. Then we asked how or by what reason our act could bée said vnlawful which was but ỹ taking of a man in his armes of very good will to stay him thinking that he had béen mad & out of his wit and might haue mischeined him self. His answere

swere therunto was that therin the act was not lawfull nor iusticiable but a Trespassers although no farther harme has ensued therupon, which yet (by your confession) there did for to speak generally: it is not lawful to imbrace or strain any man against his wil, for if him list to take it to the worst (especially if there insue any euil vnto the partie therby) it shall not help the party to say that hee ment him good or at ỳ least no euil therby, for although that in felony the intent do qualifie the fact it is not so in Trespassers wherfore your act was not lawful nor Iusticiable except yee had been Officers or otherwise ỳ yee had come in & found thẽ doing some felonious or vnlawful act, by means wherof yee had had sufficient coullour to haue laid your hands vpõ thẽ, for euery man is an Officer for peace sake & for the preseruation therof, & then (quoth hee) your case had been otherwise, vnto this wee answered that our act in all reason seemed more lawfull and tollerable then theirs, for that in their exercise there is little good purpose or none at all, nor better end or purpose then to induce such euil and vnhappy euents and consequents as hapned in this case of ours, and that therfore their cause ought not to haue fauour against vs as if we had hindered or interrupted their honest or lawful exercise in any godlines or in any thig tending vnto vertue, to the glory of God, or to the profit of the common wealth. His answere vnto that was that we are not to dispute of that which the reuerend and honorable Magistrates haue establi shed yea & holden in no small reputatiõ, it falleth for ỳ Magistrates, Rulers & Officers to beare with them in all incidents & casualties otherwise should they disallow their owne Acts and be contrary vnto themselues, which were inconuenient. Then wee demaunded of him why for the first Wiall that was broken: the Maister should not bring the action against the Dauncer who in very deed was the breaker therof, and not the other man. His answere therunto was that in very deed wee were both Trespassers vnto him alike, & he at his libertie & election to take his remedy against vs both or against any of vs for (quoth hee) although ỳ dauncer were ỳ material cause yet was ỳ other man ỳ efficiẽt cause therof, as for proof, if a carter wilfully driue his

cart ouer

ouer a man, woman or Childe, bothe the Cart, the Horses, and the Carter are guiltie of the fact wherof the deaf man is not excuseable neither can plead not guiltie to the fact, because hée was the first and chéef efficient cause, therupon wée moued vnto him this question, why the Musitians themselues should not be said to be the first efficient cause séeing ỹ without their noise the Dauncer would not so haue fared nor taken on, neither the deaf man haue taken him for a madde man, as bothe you and wée would haue don if wée had béen in his case, and had heard no more then hée heard.

Unto that his answere was, that whatsoeuer it séemed vnto him or vnto vs, it is (quoth hée) at your peril, and at all mens perils els that resorte and haut to such places to put on all our Sences, wits and vnderstandings, and also to desire God to giue them wisdome and his grace to Judge wisely & wel to digest such things as they heare and sée therin, and ỹ wée be not snared in euil through ignorant appetite of our sences vnto our hinderaunces more then wée our selues are able of our selues to Judge or think, for (saith hée) séeing wée are not able, neither is our authoritie to blame or challenge the places, neither to disalowe the things there professed, which were to derogate from the Magistrate.

Yet if wée haue so much grace of God as to the Magistrates vnto our selues and in such cases to blame and reprowe our selues, and our owne sences, and inordinate desires, either in due time before wée are fallen, or els in some reasonable time, and with our reasonable losse and hinderaunce it may suffice for answere vnto vs by them vnto whome otherwise wée must crép and pray our redresse neither able to craue it at their hands without an inconuenience aforesaid, which is condemne and disalowe the things by them selues allowed and established.

Wée asked him what reason there was that wée should be charged in seuerall actions and vnto seuerall persons, for one trespasse, as namely vnto the Maister and also to the seruants. His answere therunto was that the Maister hath a spectall interest in his seruant for the profit hée is to receiue by his seruice for which seruice hée is to recouer & not for the

hurt

hurt don vnto the person for the partie him selfe recouereth for that. To be short, his resolution was that for all our harmes and losse that we had gotten: wée were so farre from all hope of redresse or amends, that wée were in the wurse case in our defence against thē & very like to yéeld amēds by iudgement of law. And thus you sée (quoth Pierce) how poore guiltlesse & simple men in a far honester cause are put to ẏ wurser end. Neighbour Pierce (quoth our Hoast) as for ẏ, be as bée may. But truly Neighbour you had but euil successe in going to sée pleasure and to heare Musick, and yet trust mée if yée wil, I suppose ẏ you sped a great deale better then a number sped in such like places, who think neuertheless themselues to haue sped there wel, and come away right wel contented, which in very déed is the only cause why in my fantasie they sped wurse then you, for why you are hurt and féel it, but they are hurt but haue no féeling therof vntil their hurt be past all cure, for a man is neuer so daungerously sick or sore as when hée hath lost the sence and féeling of the sore or of the sicknes. So fareth it in such persons as these, for although they féel no euil that they contract, and yet in such places, yet do they carry thence with them the séeds and radical causes of great infortunes as the wofull and lamentable end of many a good mans Childe hath witnessed dayly, doth and wil. But truly Neighbour Pierce (quoth our Hoast) you are waren more then half a Lawyer by these meanes.

May soft (quoth Pierce) I haue an other matter to tel you and that almoste as straunge as this, and that chaunced to my selfe in a mischaunce about a foure yéers past, I pray yée let vs heare it quoth our Hoast, mary quoth Pierce, thus it hapned. A frend of mine would néeds giue mée my dinner at an Ordinary table where wée fared very daintely, but I promise you for mine owne parte I haue thought my self better at ease many a time & oft with bread & chéese in other Company. So Sir in the name of God when dinner was don: in stéed of grace to ẏ dice they went on euery side vpon proper square tables fit I warrāt you for the purpose, & there to the hazard they go yr. s. rl. s. v. l. vi. l. a cast, I stood by and beheld. Anon there came a straunger a plain homely fel-

lowe of the Cuntrye much like my self and hée séeing such summes of money vpon the bord, & the dice trottingto and fro and that now one snatched a heap and now an other snatched an heap, and therwithall such deuout swearing, he came to mée and rounding me in the eare, asked me whose weare all those heaps of money that were laid forth, mary (quoth I) his that can get them, get them (quoth hée) how? Marry (quoth I) by hazard, say you so (quoth hée) claime they no farther propertie in their money but by hazard whether themselues shall haue their money or an other man? no verily (quoth I) What are those white things ful of black spots that are so chased to and fro? Those (quoth I) are called dice vpon whome standeth the hazard, and therwithal my Frend and I hauing dined and dispatched: went our way forth toward the Temple, and before we had gon so farre as a man might shoot a Bird bolte: there arose an outcry behinde vs, stop the théef, stop the théef, and therwithall I loked behinde mée: and loe the fellowe of whome I tolde you, came running with both his hands ful of money and after him ran the ruler of the Ordinary and thrée or foure of his seruants as fast as euer they could run with hue and cry, we turned not back neither made vs to do therin. So they followed him vntil they came as farre as Saint Dunstones Church, and there the fellowe being out of breath, turned again and catching ỹ Maister of the dicing house in his armes: cryed I haue him I haue him, this is the théef (quoth hé) Now was the throng so great ỹ a man could not know which was which vntil at the last the Officers came and took them bothe and knowing the Maister of the dicing house: asked him what the matter was.

Mary (quoth hé) this Villain Théef hath robbed diuers Men of Worship my Guests of great summes of money and I haue followed him for he fled vpon the fellony. And there hée had spied mée in the Company & bad thẽ lay hold vpon me for this knaue (quoth he) gaue him ỹ coũcel & is as false a théef as hée. There was no more to say, I was laid hold vpon & apprehended, and bothe hée and I caried before a Justicer of peace the fellows and I, my frend would not leaue mée but went with mée to sée and heare the end. So sir, when wée

were

were come before the Iusticer: hée laid sore to the Fellowes charge that hée had broken his house forciblie and burglarlie and had felloniously robbed foure Gentlemen of worship his Guests of diuers summes of money feloniously and against the Quæns lawes and peace. Sirra (quoth the Iustice) what saist thou to this? Sir quoth the fellowe I beseech you to stãd my good Frend and Maister and let mée haue but law & reason at your hands, I trust it appereth vnto your discretion (quoth hée) that this matter alleadged against mée is not sufficient to put me to answere therunto. First for the forcible entrie into his house and burglarye supposed: I say his house was open, and dayly is and to long hath bèen and vnto to many if it pleased God and the Maiestrates such as your Worship is, for I vndertake hée that hath any thing to lose and cast away: need neither breake doore nor walle to leaue it behinde him there, and so much for my answere vnto that part. As to the money supposed to be stolne: hée declareth no certaintie therof, neither conueieth to him self any property therin, and so no fellony of ỳ thing wherto no man claimeth propertie, very true it is (quoth hée) that I came into his house and séeing a company standing about a square Table & diuers great heaps of money laid forth therupõ: I asked this honest man that was a stander by meaning (mée) what was ment thereby, and also by two white square things full of black spots that were chased to and fro vpon the bord, hée answered mée that they were playing at the dice, for that is quoth he the name of those square bones, and said farther that the name of their game was hazard. When I had heard him say so: I considered with my self that there might be good to be don for me among them, for hauing wel marked their order: I found them the moste indifferent People to gain by that euer I met withall in my life, for I perceiued that hée that laid the money downe: the rest meant that hée should neuer take it vp again, and for his parte hée ment aswell vnto them and that all this stood in the fauour of hazard, and so often time it chaunced accordingly, to wit that the bor bée-ing the third person: caught a share and by no other nor better title then mée thought my self to haue, for me thought I was

as indifferent to euery of them as was the boy or as any of them was to other, for I verily thought and yet dw that if neither of them euer fingered that laid down either had his desire against other, moreouer quoth hée, when I beheld such lewd and shameful mispending of ỹ time, such horrible swearing and blaspheming & knew not where neither vnto whõe to complain for reformation therof and thought in conscience I ought not to suffer it as far forth as it were in my might & I saw no way so likely to redresse it as to take away ỹ cause which I perceiued was the money. I thought that both by law and good conscience I might dw it and ought also, and in this deliberation I awaighted my time & snatched vp al that I could lay holde vpon and came my way, wherupon I pray your discretion and whether this be fellony wherin there is title or at ỹ leaſt cullour of title. A Sirra quoth the Iusticer, you are acũning théef indéed, it is time to lok to such knaues as you are. Sir quoth the poor fellowe, I beséech you be good to me, I am a poore man and I trust, sauing against them ỹ lost the money the money is mine against all men and as vnto them when they demaund me: let me answere. And as touching that honest man quoth heby me, I neuer delt with him nor neuer saw him before, to be short the Fellowe was committed to Newgate, and I was fain to finde surety by recognisaunce to appéer at the next sessions there to make answere to such matter as should then and there be laid to my charge and that cost me fiue shillings and this was all that I got by hauing my dinner giuen mée.

And what said your Lawyer to you for this said our Hoast, what comfort doth he giue you of a mendes against the partie that thus misused you, truely (quoth Pierce) hée vtterly discourageth mée to stur or meddle farther therin, and all vpon the same reasons that hée made before or els the very like in effect Truely Neighbour quoth our Hoast, that Lawyer was no Counceller neither for your purpose and much lesse for his owne. Why so Neighbour (quoth Pierce?) marry quoth our Hoast, for there is no courage in him, neither hath he ỹ way to help him self, & to kéep you in doing, in ỹ he giueth such coũsel to peace and quietnes, vnto such fellowes as you ỹ

would

would gladly cut him out worke if him self were not his own hinderãce. Nay surely Neighbour q Pierce, what counsel soeuer he had geuen me therin, or what counsel he or any other of them all shall hereafter giue me in such matters: I am taught alredy though to my cost, while I liue to loue peace & ensue it, & to loue mine owne house, my honest labour & trauel and cheefly & aboue all other things to serue God wherin I finde the only stay and comfort of mans life to rest, & that when all is sought and tried: there is none other rule ne leuel wel and surely to guid and order our affairs and dooings.

The application of Pierces tale by the Hoste, that the great charges of the Law is profitable to the common welth, and a repressing of vice and sinne. Cap 13.

AYa, very wel said thẽ (quoth our Hoste) I am glad ẏ yet at the last ye are cõe to ẏ poĩt wherunto I haue al this while laboured to bring you which is to cõfesse ẏ these great and excessiue charges & expences haue reformed & changed you from an vngodly and troublesome man: to a Godly, wise and prudent man, able to giue counsell not only priuatly and to your owne frends and famely: but also to beare office and authoritie in your Parrish, yea in ẏ whole Shire where we both dwell, so that I hope from henceforth we shall haue great store of you, and that of the greatnes of such fees and charges of suites in Law, and of the first Assessors and the now receiuers therof ye are vtterly concluded & estopped to speak or think saue in all honor & reuerence. Doo you think so Neighbour (quoth he?) Yea verily quoth he, for you haue confessed all this your reformatiõ & amendment to haue commen thence, and lok what effect it hath wrought in you: ye are of charitie bound to think that it hath wrought, worketh & wil worke in a number mo then you, and the mony that you haue or rather think that haue departed from: is in their hands who are treasurers therof, as I haue aleaged towards the good and godly vses, intents & purposes that may or shall arise hereafter in cõmon benefit, to wit, seruice of the whole common welth, wherin your part is as farre forth as theirs. Doo you call this a mending Neighbour Simon quoth

Pierce: In very déed quoth he, I must néeds confesse, that these great and excessiue Charges and large Expences haue rebuked me, haue chasticed and amended me, but to say that I think or iudge it thank worthy vnto them that haue receiued my money: I say the Deuil kisse his arsse that so amendeth me or any frend of mine, for verily such amending in my iudgement, deserueth asmuch and the very like thanks as did the Wife, who gaue her husband two strong poisons, meaning to spéed him in déed, but the poysons béeing of contrary natures: wrought one vpon an other, and destroyed either others force, wherby the man béeing hardly handled for a season, yet béeing driuen into a lask by their extremitie: auoyded them bothe and with them much corruption, so that where before he was a very corrupt body: he was by their clensings the better 11. yéers after. Thus she did him good by accident, but far from her intent or purpose, and vtterly against her will. And surely they that take so excessiuely of me and of others our money, & by that kinde of punishment amend and reforme vs: I holde them worthy as much thank therfore as was this Wife at her husbands hand for his amendment which was wrought by her meane. For I dare safely vndertake, that for our affliction and punishment, or for the dishonour of God and other vngodlynes that dependeth therupon: they are as sorowful as was the parish Clark of a Town that was sore visited with the Plague, who said vnto his wife vpon a day. Wife (quoth he) if there come two corpses to day: we will haue a shoulder of Mutton and a quart of Sack to supper, & if there come but one: wée will haue a shoulder of Mutton and but a pinte of Sack. Content husband (quoth she) And verily I think that as hartely as this good man & his Wife praied for their recouery that were visited: so hartely pray these for peace, quietnes and the honor and seruice of God, and the Godly & charitable dealing and liuing of their Neighbours and Brethren.

Pierce prooueth that the sufferaunce of wickednes and vngodlynes increaseth their gaine who are and should be therebukers and punishers therof, and that to be the cause of great

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in iuſtice and vnrighteouſnes. Cap. 14.

NEighbour Pierce (quoth our Hoſte) I pray you let me further vnderſtand what yée doo meane by this hiſtory, for it ſhould ſéem that ye haue alleadged it againſt mee, not with ſtanding that it maketh for me by the wunderfull effect which you your ſelf are forced to confeſſe, that it hath wrought vpon you. I knowe what I haue confeſſed Neighbour (quoth Pierce) and alſo in what maner I haue confeſſed it, far enough from your purpoſe or any confirmation therof. And where in maintenance of theſe great fées and reuenues you haue alleaged that they are publique, and alſo how many and how good & godly are the effects and fruits therof: without proof made of them or of any one of them, either by your owne experience or by other neceſſary demonſtration. There in proof of the contrary to wit, that they are proper and priuate, and therfore exceſſiue and vnreaſonable which is my aſſertion, I haue brought you this proffe of mine owne experience, wherby I haue ſufficiently ſhewed that the firſt cauſes of all theſe great gaines and profits are proſecuted as I haue affirmed and not perſecuted as you pretend. For I haue partely ſhewed you héer what leaue and libertie the common people namely youth haue to follow their own luſt and deſire, in all wantonnes and deſſolution of life. For further proof wherof: I call to witneſſe the Theaters, Curtines, Heauing houſes, Riſling bothes, Bowling alleyes and ſuch places where the time is ſo ſhamefully miſpent, namely the Sabaoth daies vnto the great diſhonor of God, and the corruption and vtter diſtruction of youth. All which (I ſay) are either the cauſes or the effects of theſe great gaines and reuenues, or els both cauſes and effects interchaungeably. For I dare vndertake that if either theſe gains and profits were publique as you pretend, or els if there were as great gain and proffit to the Maieſtrates and Officers, in the godly liues and honeſt conuerſation of the common people as there is in the contrary: theſe harbours of vngodlines & miſnurture, would haue leſſe fauour and maintenaunce

renaunce then they haue, and godlines, Sobrietie and modestie of liues & maners: would be in greater estimation then they are, and the honor and glory of God more aduaunced therby. But alas that the honor and glory of God and the vaine glory, pompe and maiestie of man cannot stand together, and that one of thē must nēds fall in the others exaltation, for certainly the more libertie vnto wickednes & sinne and the more falling from God through the same: and the more humbly complainings vnto your good Lordships, and vnto your good Worships. The more Recognances for the peace and good a bearing, aswel by the Godly as by the vngodly, the one inuading and the other defending: the more praying, paying, waiting, attending, bowing, crowding, & courtesing, procuring of frendship by meanes, bribing of his flatterer, & bribing of her flatterer, this driueth the great welth and abundance into few mens hands. For where the vngodly through misgouerment is fallen into daunger of the Law, what wil he not giue to redeem his life or his infamye: yea euen vnto them who were the first causes and occasions of his fall into such folly and mischaunce through libertie and not restraint of the contempt of God, his Lawes, and seruice, which he will not fayle to measure and fully to reward vnto all libertines, contemners and despisers of his maiestie and will, giuen them ouer into a reprobate minde, from vice to vice, vntil he hath fully brought him to naught.

So dangerous and fearfull a thing is libertie and not restraint of the beginning of euil, which although they appear not such at the first: yet when they are come to their ripenes and haue brought forth their increase, to wit, Felonyes, Thefts, Man slaughter, Murder and such like: there is not so ignorant a person that will not say, the man or woman was neuer like to come to better end, namely for his euil and dissolute life in the beginning.

This libertie is in the hands of Maiestrates and Officers to bid or to forbid, euen after as they will prefer the honor and glory of God, or els their owne welth, pomp and vaine glory. And therfore how hartely were it to be desired at the hands of GOD, that such as are Maiestrates and Officers:

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should not be couetuo⁹, orels such as are couelo⁹ should not be Magistrates, for heerof Iethro did warne Moyses in ẏ xviij. of Exodus, talking with him concerning the election and choise of Maiestraes and Officers, and bad him chuse such as hated couatise, and spake of no other vice. The cause wherof is apparant, to wit least the wickednes and vngodlines of the people came to be valuable let and set, rented and farmed, bought and solde, for what other thing is valluing, letting and setting, renting, buying and selling of offices whose value is more or lesse according to the state of the people and their dishonouring of God therby. And where you maintaine these great gains by their godly and woorthy effects, the first wherof you alleadge to be their great purchase of lordships, lands and possessions and the effect therof you alleadge to be a prouision and patrimony for the good and godly, the effect wherof yee say is the increase of them, and the decrease of the contrary, the effect wherof you say is godlines, vnanimitie, loue, charetie and benignitie one towards an other. And last of all the effect therof be the manifold graces and blessings of God promised by God in the Psalmes to the house, town, Cittie or Cuntry where these things are. From the first cause to his effect I graunt your argument, that these great gains are cause of great purchase, but from ẏ purchase to his effects yee shew not how it is: but how it ought to be, for instead of the effects wherof you haue spoken; I see many gay houses ful of gay chimneis, costly banqueting houses, Galleries, bowling Alleis, strange toies of point deuise and woorkmanship, but within I finde no man dwelling saue pride, who hath chased thēce hospitalitie and charitie, and as for other preferment that the godly haue at their hands in any of their purchases: I see nōe but euen who wil giue moste, and can make mightiest frēds, and who those are in our daies: the vngodly, vnfaithfull and vncharitable dealing so vniuersally doo plainly declare.

The people so euel giuen both yong and olde, so vngodly in liuing so vnciuil, yea so rude & barbarous in manners, wherin me thinketh they haue preuailed & increased more & more all after as these offices haue waxen more gainfull and ẏ desire

to haue them greater. And therfore your distinction betweẽ their purchase and the merchant, chapman, and other cõmon persons what soeuer (sauing his probabilitie) vain and ridiculous to the purpose. Therfore Neighbour Simon (quoth Pierce) your reasons are weak & to maintain the greatnes of their fees vnable. Abide Neighbour Pierce quoth our Hoaste, giue me leaue to answere vnto these matters, & first because that in very deed probable reason giueth place to necessary proof & demonstration, wherin ye suppose that ye haue gon beyond me, because ỳ against my bare & naked reasons as you terme them, ye haue alleadged authoritie, and that of your owne experience. I wil answere you with the like, and that of mine owne experience also, and more direct vnto my mater then any of yours, which are indeed indirect and stand in different, and I wil proue that the Magistrate and Officer in the beginning was and yet is such as I haue aleadged and also the first assessing of the said fees and reuenues, and their great vtilitie and necessitie, namely for the vses intents and purposes aforesaid. For proof wherof I wil rehearse vnto you a matter which I my self did bothe heare and see.

The Hoste maintaineth the contrary, and for disproofe therof, and for the proofe of his assertion: alleadgeth the purchase of a certain welthie Officer towards the Law.

Chap. 15.

ABout two yeeres agon it was my fortune to be beyond London in Kent, at the house of a worshipfull Officer towards the Law, who not past a Moneth before my comming thither: had purchased a Lordship, wherin were diuers good farmes, and their leases to expire at Michelmas then to come twelue Moneths. It came to passe one day of my beeing there: thither came a rich man dwelling not farre thence, whose sute was to this Gentleman to take one of his said Farmes in reuertion, and comming to him thus he began. Sir quoth he, I vnderstand ye haue bought such a Lordship, God giue ye ioy thereof. Ma-

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ry true it is (quoth hée) Sir q this rich man, I pray you let me be your tenaunt of such a Farm, geuing more then any other man wil giue for a fine. The rent of the Farm was v. l.

What will ye giue me for a leale for xxj. yéeres quoth this Gentleman? Sir quoth he I wil giue ye an C.l. and vnto our Mistresse a Veluet gown, and xx. Angels to buy her pines besides. You haue bidden like a Chapman said the Gentleman, giue me leaue to be aduised vnto Munday next said he, and then I shall giue you an answere hérin, so causing him to tary dinner he let him departe, and this was vpon a Thursday

The next day béeing Friday: this Gentleman sent for the Farmer of the same péece of land, who came thither, and with him thrée handsome yong men his sonnes. So when he was by the Landlords commaundement brought before him: he asked him of what age he was. He answered lxvj. yéeres. He asked him how long he had dwelled in that Farm. He answered that he had dwelt there all his life for he was borne in it and his father before him. You know quoth the Gentleman that I am now become your Landlord. I knowe it very wel quoth he, and I beseech you of your fauour. What will you giue for a new lease of xxi. yéeres quoth the Gentleman? for you knowe your olde lease is nér an end. Sir quoth the poore man, let me giue you reason, only that I may be able to do my Prince and your worship seruice, & to relæue my poore neighbours as hetherto I haue done, and haue bén wel able. Very wel quoth the Gentleman, be hér again vpon Munday next and then ye shall vnderstand more. The poore man (his duty don) departed. The nert Munday béeing munday nert before Bartholmew day: the poore man was come again, and brought with him a couple of fat Capons, & about an houre or twaine after came this Churle very wel mounted his Gelding not déere of x.l. and behinde him was trussed a fat Buck, which he presented vnto the Gentlemen by one of his seruants. To be short: he was willed to come in to the H. into a close little Parlor, whether were called also this olde farmer and I my self, whom it pleased him to vouch safe all curtesie and humanitie both in this and also in o-

ther matters, so that only we foure were there, hauing a yong man attendant vpon his person. This done: the Gentleman began friend quoth he, what accusation do you bring against this poore man pointing him to the Farmer. Sir q. he none, I do not know the man. No quoth the Gentleman except ye can accuse him of euel: ye haue already condemned your self therof, and would do me. Why so sir quoth he? Marry Sir quoth the Gentleman, for he cannot be guiltles of euil: that seeketh the destruction and death of a guiltles man.

Sir quoth the fellowe, ye charge me wrongfully, I neuer sought any mans death. Sir quoth the Gentleman, he that seeketh to take away the full enaunce of a mans life, that man say I, seeketh his death, & that by so much a more cruel mean as it is a more cruell and fearfull death, to starue of hunger or colde: then it is to be quickly and readily dispatched and murthered, and so soon rid out of pain. Ye haue quoth hee, desired to take this poore mans farme from him, being his only stay, and haue so bidden for it: that I know he may not liue but in extreme misery if he take it at your hands. Sir q. he, yee are the first great purchaser y euer I heard of this opinion. I haue sir Farmes quoth he, taken all after this maner at their hands that do think them selues both wise and worshipfull, yet was there neuer put vnto me such a problem as this by any of them, yet drink I a C. la yeer by them aboue all charges. Frend quoth the Gentleman other mens doing are no president vnto me further then they stand with my dutie vnto God, and with the discharging of my calling, for he hath bidden vs by his prophet to stand vp and enquire after the olde waies, and if they be good: then to goe in them or els not. Which being spoken generally vnto all estates: how much more vnto them of my calling, and therfore admitting that such hard & extreme dealing might stand wth the dutie of euery priuat person, either vnto God or vnto their Cuntry and common welth, or els with their owne assurãce which I vtterly deny, yet could it not stand with my dutie, nor of any man of my calling. First for the priuat person, & to remoue y such extreme dealing stãdeth not with his du-

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tie towards God, al his cōmandements doo manifestly prooue wherin he so straightly commandeth vnto vs charetie, loue & benignitie one towards an other, wout the which a mā dare not say that hee looueth God whom he neuer saw, neither that he hath any faith, now what looue or charetie is there in him that letteth vnto his Neighbour a lease of hunger, want & all misery & calametie, & so molesteth ẏ man, which God forbad to doo vnto the Oxe. The next to wit, it standeth not with his dutie to the common welth, the very woord common welth: dooth sufficiently showe, for if a man liue in the cōmon welth he must haue some of the ioyes and fruits therof, or els it is to him no common welth, namely traueling and labouring sore therin, neither wil he that a man beare any good wil toward that common welth wherin the ioyes and sorowes, welth & woe are so vnequally deuided and this standeth not with the assurance of the common welth, which increaseth by the vnitie, looue & concord, & falleth & decayeth by their contraryes. These the two first beeing prooued: it resteth me to prooue that such extreme taking & exacting standeth all with th'assurance of the very partie him self in euery priuate mans case, & this seemeth stranger and harder to prooue: then the resedue hath been, but it is not so, namely vnto him that goeth with the Prophet Dauid into the house of God & there inquireth therof, for there hee shall plainly vnderstand that all is not cleerly gotten that is put into the pursse, for I my selfe haue known a number quoth he, that haue raised iiij. times double ẏ reuenues that their ancesters liued welthily & woorshipful vpon, yea and before their death woul d fain haue solde land if they had had any.

The cause wherof is for that God who is not present nor called to councell in such extreme taking: wil neuer be present nor giue counsel or aduise in the bestowing, & spending of the same, either to his honor & glory: or els to their owne benefit, but giueth them ouer to delight in vile and vaine pleasures, and to be gainfull and benificiall vnto the Ministers of voluptuousnes and sensualitie and flatterers, whose freendship endeth when the tap leaueth rnnning, and when

a mans owne liuing is gon and spent: there is nothing to be had at their hands but a mock or a flout.

But the Landlord that dealeth wel with his tenant hath of him an assured and vnfained Frend, and that is proued by the very duties and seruices which by our ancient lawes are incident vnto tenures. For what Frend or what Seruant shall a man finde that wil so abace him selfe as (kneling vpon his knees, his head vncouered, his waste vngirded, (holding his hands ioynt betwen the hands of his frend or Maister) will say I become your man and faith will beare you, sauing the faith which I owe vnto God and to my Prince.

All which the homager doth vnto his Lord, what may not a man hope at his hands that is thus allied vnto him, this also is farther verrified by the said honorable and ancient Lawe of this land which doth giue vnto the Lord a writ of aid pour file marier aid pour fair son fitz Cheualier. And do binde the Tenaunt to serue his Landlord in the warres either in his person or by sufficient Deputie. In all which things the Lawe hath an honorable consideration to deliuer the Landlord from carefull and heathenish desire, and care together for the preferment of his Children. being already assured where to leaue the same and neither charged with the gathering in or with the dangerous keeping therof, either from the Theef or from his owne misgouernment or intemperaunce of life in apparell or in diet, which are moste perrillous thæues. Also for the seruice of his Prince and his owne defence. It is not to tel what a masse of treasure is spent vpon how few men that are but hirelings and come but for their hire for the which they euer think they do to much and are alwaies ready to finde occasion of quarrel bearing (as I haue said) no loue to the man nor seruing therfore but for the hire.

But of the Tenaunt it is and hath been wel proued to be otherwise and that in many a famous and memorable Journey happily atchieued by our Auncestors to their great commendation. Shortly this frendship dieth not, but with the parties, except it be through the Landlords great default either

ther selling the land and therwithall his deerest and moste assured Frends, or els by extreame couetise and crueltie taking from him all mean to liue able to be a Frend.

Bothe which things are now of late yeres waxen to common, the more pittie. Thus it appeereth quoth hee, that such hard and extreame dealing standeth not with the dutie of any priuate person either toward God and his common welth, nor with his owne assuraunce and countenaunce. How much lesse with our duties which excelleth theirs as far as heauen excelleth the earth, namely towards God and our Cuntry before whome we sustain so great an expectation of godlines vertue and all benignitie, so largely and so liberally rewarded vnto a desire of priuate gaine and lucre from the beginning, which desire would likewise detect vs of all impietie of perciallitie and fauour vnto al vngodlines and wickednes, beeing the first causes of all our great gain where through we become Purthasers.

And therwithall he made an end and putting his hand in to his pocket: he drew forth two deeds indented, and causing his Clarke to read the one parte which was a lease for one and twenty yeres after the old rent, he sealed and subscribed it, and in our presence deliuered it as his deed vnto the olde Farmer. The rich fellowe beholding this, took him to be very glad and praised God therfore. so great and reuerend is the misstery of godlines (as saith Saint Paule) that euen they who in their deeds and workes haue denied the power therof, yet are they touched with remorce to reuerence it in others and to haue their deeds in admiration.

This matter thus ended, the rich Fellowe tok his leaue and the next day I my self hauing ended my busines came away also A A A A A A Amen quoth Pierce Plowman.

What meane you by such a very long Amen Neighbour Pierce (quoth our Hoste) Beati qui audiunt, (quoth Pierce) what meane you Neighbour quoth our Hoste? Nam miranda canunt quoth Pierce? I trow the man doteth quoth our Hoste, Nay Neighbour quoth Pierce, I am afraid leaste you dote your self, why? quoth our Hoste, doth this matter seeme so

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strange and maruelous vnto you: I will tell you another matter which is as true as this and of mine owne experience also. I pray you let mée heare Neighbour quoth Pierce.

¶ An other tale by the Hoast of a yong Gentleman that had morgaged his Land, comming to an other great Officer of the Law to whome hee offered to sel his land of whome hee had great comfort.

Chap. 16.

IT fortuned an other time I was in Kent also at the house of an other great and rich Officer towards the Lawe, where I had occasion to soiourne certain daies, during which time there came thether a yong gẽtleman to offer his Land to sel, and made an offer therof, vnto this man in my presence, vnto whome this Worshipfull Lawyer spake in this maner.

Wherfore will you sel your Lands (quoth hée) béeing an ancient possession and a fair liuing: Sir (quoth this yong man) I am fallen into great det comming to my Lands before I was wise, and haue morgaged my Land for two hundred pound, which except I come within these ten dayes: I vtterly lose my Land.

You haue brought your self into great extremitie (quoth this Gentleman) how be it, to sel your Land: mée think a very hard remedie therof, and great pittie if any other way might be taken, for hée that selleth away his Land: selleth away his best and moste assured Frend. Besides that to sel away namely his auncient Patremony and which hée neuer bought: is both shamefull and slaunderous as to haue disherited & destroyed his name, house & familie, which is an odious thing & the thing which the good Nabothe the Israelite denyed euen vnto the King of Israel, for when Achab demaunded of him his Vinyard for as much as it was worth, God forbid said the poore man that I should sell thée my Fathers Inheritaunce, béeing yet but a poore Viniard: yet did hée defend it to the losse of his life. Wée may read in the old Testament

ſtament how greatly God himſelf fauored the maintenance and preſeruation of Inheritaunce & poſſeſſion in their Tribes, houſes, names and families. For he commaunded by Moyſes expreſſely if any man ſolde his Inheritaunce beeing Land or houſe: it ſhould return vnto him again in the yeere of Iubile which was euery fiftie yeeres. Alſo that Women vnto whom Lands and Inheritaunce were deuolute in default of heires males ſhould not marry into any other Tribe. Wherfore (q hee) I wiſh you to haue a great regarde in departing from your Inheritaunce ſo great a bleſſing of God, for it is a great infamie & reproche to be ſaid, an vnthrift and ꝑ firſt decaier of a houſe & familie whether it were greater or ſmaller.

Alas ſir (quoth this yong man) I am in greater diſtreſſe, yee knowe theſe Merchaunts of London are hard dealers with whome there is no mercy but for ready paiment, wel quoth the Gentleman, I will doo thus much for you, I my ſelf wil lend you an hundreth pound which you ſhal repay by fortie pound a yeer, and that I ſuppoſe you may eaſely doo ordering your ſelf wiſely, take that quoth hee & offer it to the Merchaũt if happily he may be intreated to giue you a yeer or twain for the reſt vpon reaſonable conſideration, ꝑ yong man gaue him harty thanks, ꝑ money was fetched down, counted & deliuered & th'aſſurãce made accordingly, which being doon ꝑ yongmã took his leaue & hartily deſired me (although a meer ſtranger vnto him, (yet becauſe I was preſent & a witnes of ſo great curteſie & humanitie) to go with him to London vnto this Merchants houſe, which I alſo was content to doo, and hauing diſpatched the occaſion of my there beeing, and hauing likewiſe taken my leaue: to London wee came and to the Merchants houſe wee went, when wee came before this Merchant the yong Gentleman began to intreat him as faire as hee could and telling him of this good & godly Lawyer and of his great compaſſion, his good councell and perſwaſion: deſired him to accept this C.l. in part of paiment, and to giue him a yeere or twaine for payment of the reſt. This Merchant hauing heard all the matter: now GOD forbid

(quoth he) that euer a Lawyer should heap coales vpon Merchants head, or that a Merchant should not be as willing and as ready to dw a godly deed as a Lawyer, hauing receiued at the hands of God the like habilitie therto. And therwithall hauing receiued the C.l. hée tok his owne bond for the rest to be paid by x.l. a yéer, his first pay to begin after the Gentlemans C.l. ful paid and deliuered vnto him all his Indentures and other assurances of the Morgage, and making vs great chéere he let vs departe. Now when I would haue taken my leaue of this yong Gentleman: I could by no meanes forbid him to bring mée on my way hitherward, as farre as Ware xx. miles on this side London, where he paid all my charges for that night, and the next day wée tok leaue eache of other and departed either of vs toward his owne. Thus ye see how fruitful was the good and gracious deed of one man, and how it prouoked the zeale of an other to dw the like.

AAAAAAA Amen (quoth Pierce.) Well quoth our Hoste, because you dw so hardly receiue my prefes: I will bring you more store of them, and such as I am ready to verifye against whomsoeuer will deny their trueth.

An other tale of the Hoste of a worshipfull Lawyer that made leases to all his tenaunts of the Farmes they held for Li. yeers after a strange sorte and also very wisely.

Chap. 17.

IT was (quoth hée) in Buckingham Shire not very long sithence, at the house of a rich Officer toward the Law whome I could name if néed required, who during the time of my bée-ing there, made vnto all his Tenants leases of their farmes, wherof I my self am witnes, present at their Sealing and deliuerye. The leases are for li. yéeres from the day of the date therof, the rent reserued as followeth. Yélding and paying vnto the said Leasor and his heires yérly during so many of the said li. yéres as th'inheritaunce shall remaine in him or them, not solde, exchaunged, morgaged, forfaited, leased in reuertion or otherwise

wise estraunged vl. currant money of England, and yeelding and paying from and immediatly after any such act don by him or them or any of them v. s. yearly of like currant monie, and so after the rate of other rents were they greater or smaller. Prouided alwaies, that the tenaunt shall not sell, set nor let their said Farme or any pertel therof, without the assent and licence of the said Leassor or his heires, of which reseruation I asked him a reason, whereunto his answere was this. See (quoth hee) how hard a matter it is for yong Gentlemē vnto whom it falleth by the grace and gift of God to be Landlords and owners, wisely to order & gouern either their possessions, lands and reuenues or themselues. I know also (quoth hee) that in the wisdome, prudency and good gouernment of such, standeth the happy and prosperous estate of a common welth, and her misery in the contrary, and therfore in my iudgement ought all men generally to wish, yea and to endeuour that the greatest lands and possessions may be in their hands who both can and will order and dispose the same to the honor and glory of God and to the profit of the common welth, wherin me thinketh sauing reformation, the to often and to common translation of possession, is not the least matter nor last to be considered, as well for the causes therof which are euill: as also for the effects therof which are worse. The causes that make men to sell their patrimonyes and to spoyle their inheritance, who knoweth not to be these, riot, gaine, whordome, delight in all vngodly pleasures and pastime of sensualitie, shortly the not fearing of God, nor seruing him, and the not caring to knowe his will and commandements, nor to liue therafter, these are the causes. The effects are these, first the spoyle of the land and the making it barren and bare of all the commodities therof, secondly the dislodging and disapointing of the honest Farmers and good house keepers, for their sakes that will dw more then they, without any other respect, and those are commonly the wicked and vngodly, and from thence ariseth infinit sutes and controuersies, maintenaunces, champerties and such like.

This causeth lands often to chaunge their tenaunts and

inhabitants, and by that means breacheth and dissolueth one of the greatest and surest bonds of loue and frendship that is or euer was, namely, coeducation, conuersation and acquaintaunce, which hatcheth, nourisheth and confirmeth loue and frendship, not only betweén men: but euen betweén the brute and vnreasonable beasts, who hauing béene fostered long together in one place, will not only loue and defend one an other: but also euen the very place wherin they were bred and nourished, and they will very hardly be sundred or driuen there from. And this is the very law of kinde, which can not effectually worke among neighbours, of whome some are dayly or yeerly flitting and giuing place vnto new, namely such as will bid more the which commonly are the worser sorte as hath béen already alleaged. These are two effects.

The third is the sinceritie of Justice and also of dicipline both which it greatly hazardeth, namely for ỹ buyers and sellers are Correlatiues, and that the one cannot be without the other, and for that also the causes of selling & spoyling of patrimonies are such as I haue already declared. These things are right perillous in a common welth, and yet do almoste necessarily followe the too often and common translation of possession and inheritaunce, namely where it is by peny purchase, against the which neuertheless it is meruelous hard to foresée and to prouide, I meane for heires and inheritours of Lordships, Lands and possessions to continue in the same, béeing things that so many desire to haue, yea often times such as haue in their hands the bridle of libertie, or restraint of good and euill, and of the liues and manners of men, for what is there in all this earth so much desired as houses, landes, Lordships and possessions, and to commaund ouer people? What els is the end of all so many and great trauels, watch, studie so many and so great hazards by Sea and land, so many shifts, sleights, deceits and oppressions, of all which this world hath béen, is & euer wil be full, against all which who so will holde a thing of so great value: he must be well prouided and of great defence, and hath néed to haue in himself the strength, wisdome, councell and iudgement of many,

and

and so much the rather by how much his possession is ẏ greater, and that for two causes. First for that in his errour of life fall and misgouernment: lyeth the fall, ruin and decay of a number, what of his owne blod, what of his tenaunts, faithfull frends and seruants. Secondly for that his estate is subiect vnto many enimies, of whom the greatest and moste dangerous is the flatterer the olde enemie of all mankinde, as the story of our Father Adam and mother Eue and the Serpent doth well declare. This moued Iuno as Ouid fableth to commit Io her Cow vnto Argus to kéep, which Argus had an hundred eyes in his head, and therfore much adoe had Mercury to deceiue him withall his swéet songs and Musick, for when he had brought on of his eyes a slæp, yea diuers of them, yet waked diuers other and stod vpon their ward, and whether his face or his back were towards Io: yet he alway beheld her.

¶ A reason why Coppyholdes, Customes and Corporations, were first ordained, and how that Pride and Flattery are the cheef causes that many a yong Gentleman commeth to sell his Lands. Chap. 18.

AND surely in mine oppinion this moued the wise & honorable fathers & Maiestrates of old time to incorporat so great liuings & possessions, & also to erect & establish in Lordships so many coppy holds and custummary tenures as the moste soueraigne remedy against pride and surcuydrie, which commonly accompanieth the priuate, singuler & sole proprietie in land, possession, office or any other thing whatsoeuer, & also a way and meane to furnish the common welth with many both able to deserue well and to do good also glad and willing therto, vnto the which pride is either the only let and impediment: or els of all other the greatest as he vpon whom flattery attendeth, yea and in such sorte that he leadeth him by the nose vp and down the house, ma-

king him to beléeue of himself any thing, causing him also to delight no while in any one thing, whether it be apparell or the fashion therof, place, person, dyet, frend, seruant, Tenaunt or other thing what soeuer, and this as dayly experience teacheth, is the high and ready way to ỳ Vsurers house and from thence to the Extorcioner, who dwelleth hard by, of which twaine by that time he hath taken forth his lesson kindely: I dare be his suretie hée wil not be hasty to dow good to any good body, neither if he would shall he haue wherwith all, for either shall he haue no lands left him at all: or if he haue any, he shall be glad to let them dearer then that any honest man shall dow good thereon, so that in conclusion, both the Landlord and the tenaunt shalbe miserable.

The cause hérof is Pride moste and chéefly, as I haue said, and oftentimes youth, good nature, or peraduenture excesse of Pleasure and Sensuall delights, where through yong Gentlemen are often snared through euill company, béeing ouertaken sometime by giuing their word, sometime through a bribe of a little present mony, sometime by one deceit, sometime by an other, wherin men are some pampred, namely such as are of small experience and iudgement, and knowe not the false lures of the wicked and vngodly, against all which these Corporations and customes are of great force and a great defence, for in both these cases: hardly can they be assaulted, much lesse inuaded by any of the enemies aforesaid.

First for that a corporation is neuer vnder age, as for example, Maior and Comminaltie, Deane, and Chapter, Wardens and Fellowes and such like, whose succession is by election, their proprietie is ioynt and in common, neither can one dow any thing without the rest, and therfore to flatter any one of them vaine, and to flatter them all very hard namely mens Natures, Wit, Iudgements and Affections béeing diuers, and euery man willing to maintaine and prefer his owne opinion or his frends. Pride atteinteth them not, for who is proud, or at the least so proud of any thing, wherin a number hath to commaund as much as he, and

without

without whom he can doo nothing, then beeing armed against Pride the Father of necessitie and need: they are better freely to affoorde their good woord or deed, and therfore in vaine were it to bribe them.

But admit that any of them would be bribed, it were also in vaine and would procure the euill will of all the rest without bribing them all which were heauy and hard to doo.

So that in any competition made vnto such persons against any olde Freend, Tenaunt, Officer or seruant: it is very hard to preuaile except it be through his owne great misbehauiour. And where it is betweén meere Straungers one of them against an other, there the best and moste woorthy is sure to spéed, for certainly and infallible there is nothing in all this woorld so amiable, so beloued and fauoured as honestie, vertue and godlines are. Where priuate flatterie or briberie stand not in their light, as in the case of priuate Owners and proprietaries: I haue alleadged that it both may and often doth. And thus much of the Corporations & of their effects. Now to speake of the customes of Manours the very same or like in effect may be said, for the Inheritour of customary Land although hée be sealed therof to him and to his heires yet can hée not sel it without licence of the Lord and that solemnly graunted by his Steward in open Court and there entred, nay hée cannot set or let the same or otherwise impaire the wood or other commodities therof without licēce aforesaid.

So great an entresse and commaundement hath the Lord therin and yet not to the hinderaunce or preiudice of ẏ Inheritaunce but e contra, namely that the selling, setting or other gouernment of such a royall possession as land is: should stand in ẏ Judgement & discretiō of diuers, & those of ẏ ripest & best aduised, and not to be solde, wasted or spoyled through ẏ intemperaunce of one foolish or vngodly man or woman either for need or necessitie or otherwise for flatery or other fōd or foolish affection whatsoeuer, wherin the Lord and his lerned Steward and the homagers of the Court are Judges.

In all which case it may euidently appéer how great a care

those

those honourable and reuerend Forefathers had to enact and establish the great possessions in the hands of such as were not like to misregarde so great and high a blessing of GOD, the effects and fruites wherof haue bæn many and great as from time to time proof hath verified and yet doth, for it hath alwaies bæn accoũted & yet is a right happy thing to be tenãt or Farmer to a Corporation or enioy any commoditie vnder them. For worshipful & honorable haue alwaies bæn their dealing in ordering and gouernment of their Lands, liuings, and possessions. and of their Tenaunts and Farmers of the same. But chæfly and aboue all others to be Tenaunt vnto the Prince, who indeed is a Corporation, for from the Prince, there can passe nothing but by writing vnder seale, neither doth or can wout the consent of diuers of the most honorable and best aduised. These (quoth hæ) are the causes and the reasons that haue moued mæ to make these leases, and therin these reseruations which vnto you do sæme so very strange. For I suppose this to be a strong meane to vnite the Landlord and his tenaunt togither, and to counterballaunce the one of them against the other in fourme of a corporation, or els as nær vnto the Nature therof as I could deuise. For by this meanes, if my heires or any of them chaunce at any time hærafter to proue vnthrifty: his vnthriftines shall not be so gainfull vnto any man ỳ in hope to purchase his lands would therfore strengthen his hands therin and by these means I haue left them moe Frends and fewer Flatterers. For hæ that shal buy his lands without the consent of the Farmer: hæ shall for the time make as good a purchase as doth hæ that purchaseth of a Woman her Husbãds lands while hæ is yet aliue, or he that goeth to the Poultrie and buying there a Capon for two shillings putteth him into his bag, and when he commeth home he findeth there nothing but a Capons leg, for in this case of mine: the buyer buyeth lesse then the Seller selleth by rir..partes, which me think should kæp them from argument vpon the price whilest either of them would fain make the best bargain for him self, as the maner of all chapmen is. And for which reason

Iesus

Ieſus Sirach ſaith of them, that ſinne ſticketh betweén the bi-er and the ſeller as faſt as doth a nail ſtick betwéen two ſtões in a wall.

This way haue I brought to be ſtronger and better aſſu-red then any entaile generall or ſpeciall both which priuate couetiſe hath found a way to deſtroy to the diſheriſon of ma-ny a good kinred and to the great decay of vertue and godly-nes, and héerin (quoth hée) I haue don my heirs no wrong, for vpon this rent I haue lined contẽt and don, if they prooue honeſt and vertuous: ſo may they do, and then I haue left them inough. and if they prooue otherwiſe: then haue I left to much and yet to little to ſerue them alſo.

Moreouer (quoth hée) I haue héerby prouided againſt the malice of ſuch tenaunts as abuſe the liberalitie of good Land lords ſetting and letting ouer vnto the third and fourth hand racking and enhaunſing the things vnto exceſſiue and vnrea-ſonable rents, and ſuch as the Landlord him ſelf would ne-uer haue don for pure ſhame and pittie, which neuerthe-leſſe béeing raiſed to his hand by others: is a perillous pre-ſident vnto him at his return vnto the poſſeſſion therof.

Thus you haue heard (quoth our Hoſte) what a godly and Fatherly care this good and vertuous Maieſtrate had to preferre the houour and glory of God and alſo the common welth of his Cuntry and People, whereby it may appéere how hartely to be deſired is the purchaſe of ſuch Perſonnes whoſe riches is the Treaſury and Storehouſe of the com-mon welth, aſwell for the ſuſtenaunce of the ſame concer-ning worldly and bodily prouiſion of tranſitorie things: as alſo for the furtherance and increaſe of Vertue, godlines and Pietie, Loue and Concord.

Ho (quoth Pierce) lay a ſtraw there for Gods ſake, marry Sir héer is ſtuffe indéed (quoth he) héer hath béen a long diſ-courſe indéed, and euen as true as all the reſt, with that I en-terrupted their talke and ſpake vnto him.

The Author interrupteth Pierce maintaining Simons Aſſertion ſhewing that of late in his ſight he knew a Lawyer gaue x.li.

to the building of a Bridge.

Chap. 19.

FAther Pierce (quoth I) these matters are not so strange nor so incredible as you weene, for proof wherof I will (if it please you to giue me leaue) to reherse a thing which I my self did se and that no longer a go then Easter Tearme last. It fortuned that I went into a Lawyers Chamber in Sergeants Inne with a Frend of mine who was Plaintiff in a replevin in Bedford shire, and being come into his Lawyers Chamber and hauing staied there a while about our busines: there came in an ancient Gentleman of the Cuntry, whome I know very wel by sight and haue don long, whom when the Maister had espied comming vp euen at the top of the staires, hee spake to him as followeth. I know wherfore you come, go down again to my man and bid him come vp to mee, which the Gentleman did, his seruant beeing come: he took forth of his Cubbord (which was vnder the square table that stood before him) a bagge wherin was ten pound and deliuering it vnto his man bad him go down and pay it vnto the Gentleman, and if any of the golde lack waight chaunge it for him. The seruant went downe and did accordingly, I thought verily it had been the rent of some house or land that he had holden of him. But euen while I was in this thought: the Gentleman comming vp again gaue him humble & hartie thanks and that in the name and behalfe of a whole Cuntrie yea of diuers Shires. Wherupon I taking occasion to enquire farther of the matter: vnderstood that he gaue that ten pound freely towards the erecting & building of a bridge, and that such charitable deeds as this are no new things vnto him. I sooner wil beleeue this (quoth Pierce) hauing of a man learned in the Lawes and whom Vertue and Learning haue preferred, then of the others that Fishen for Offices with the golden hook and neuer will what Learning ment.

Simon

Simons returne to his matter again declareth of an other rich Officer in the Law who had two Farmers, one rich and the other poore and how he delt with them.

Chap. 20.

WIth that our Hoste tok holde again, saying ỳ hée had yet one other matter to tell, and therwith he would conclude. I was an other time (quoth hée) at the house of an other rich Officer towards the Law, who dwelleth in Kent also and is a man of great welth, and one time of my béeing at his house as (I thank him) I haue béen very many times. There were two of his Tenaunts come to take new leases of their Farmes the lands béeing of equall rent & value, but yet the Farmers not equall in welth: the one hauing béen blessed (as it should séem) aboue the other for the one of them was very welthie and vpheld his Tenament in very good repaire & offered the Lord at the first word forty pound for a fine for one and twenty yéers. The other was poore and yet his tenament in decay, neither was hée able to giue fiue pounds for a fine, wherof the Landlord hauing challenged him and warning him to lok to it thereafter: willed the other to lay down his forty pounds, which hée did without delay. The Gentleman when hée had counted it: put it into a bagge and fréely gaue it vnto the poor man with these words (one of you beare an others burden) wherwith the other was so farr from béeing ill content, that hée humbly praised God, and gaue the Gentleman right hartie thanks therfore: and so he sent them away bothe very well contented. Since which time I héer of the poore man that hée is growen to great welth and of such benignitie and hospitalitie as are not many Owners or Landlords dwelling néer him. Thus (quoth our Hoste) I haue confirmed my first Assertion and haue sufficiently auoyded your reasons and examples alleadged in disproof of the same, and these haue I don by Example and demonstrations bothe moe in number then yours are: and also more euident, apt and proper vnto ỳ

purpose. That is not so Neighbour (quoth pierce) for admitting that your Examples were all or any of them true, which for the moste parte I will not graunt, yet are they perticuler and cannot make any generall Conclusion, besides ỹ you tender mée an issue vpon two affirmatiues which is against the grounds of law as I haue learned by mine owne experience dèerly bought. For I haue alleadged against you the penerall Corruption of liues and manners bèeing the effect of libertie vnto excesse and dissolution which I also haue alleadged and prooued to be an effect of priuate desire to pouch to purchase and to wax rich, from al which causes and effects conuertly my Argument is necessary and infallible and therfore bèeing alleadged affirmatiuely it demaundeth a direct & generall trauerse to the effects, which effects bèeing not disprooued: the causes therof cannot be denied, against all which matters you haue answered in the affirmatiue also, alleadging the examples of some good men, which whether they be true or not, I do not greatly force without a generall denyal of that which I haue alleadged, although that for euery example alleadged you had brought fiftèen, and so is my first Assertion maintained and standeth fast, and yours vtterly disprooued.

The Conclusion of the Conference, and the preparation to the Questions beeing the second Book.

Chap. 21.

BY this time it was warē euen dark night and our Hoast speaking vnto Pierce said vnto him Neighbour Pierce (quoth hée) wée haue reasoned so very long to and fro that the night is stolen vpon vs, and the purpose of your coming hither vtterly forgoten through our earnest disputation in these matters.

Truely Neighbour (qꝝ Pierce) I cannot think this time ill spent, I would I had neuer spent time worse if it had pleased

sed God, and therfore quoth he, if it please you to lend mée this v.C. I will be gon home, for I knowe the way at midnight. Neighbour Pierce (quoth our Hoste) your v.C. is redy, and ye shall haue it with you but not to night, for hence shal ye not departe before to morowe God willing, and namely for this strangers sake, whome I wil desire you to accompany for this night, for in his Cuntry I haue receiued many folde humanitie, as partly ye haue heard, and therfore I gladly would do him some héere to my power, and therfore this night or a conuenient part therof wée will indeuour our selues to spend together in honest mirth and exercises. And therwithall I spake, and geuing our Hoste harty thanks: desired Pierce that it might so be. Who at my request did some condiscend, and was very wel contented therwithall.

Then quoth I, séeing that we haue so wel spent the fore part of the night wherin I my self haue don nothing but harkened: let vs agrée vpon some meane to passe the time with all after supper vntil bed time, no wurse then we haue don the time before.

Now verily Gentleman (quoth our Hoste) and that is very well spoken, I beshrewe him that disagréeth therunto, if it be my self. Amen quoth Pierce Plowman if it be I. Very well then quoth I, this is my order if it may please you. After Supper euery man shall put his question and tel his tale in order, & by course wherunto eche of the others shall speak to wit vnto the question shall giue an answere of dissolution of the saying and vnto the tale shall shew their good or il liking, and hée that telleth the best and wisest tale to wit of highest and best sentence and putteth the sharpest and wisest question moste tending to vertue and edifying of the hearers or giues the wisest and best solution: hée shall haue his breakfast héer to morrow at the charges of the other twain. Content withall my hart quoth our Hoste. Content quoth Pierce Plowman. But to whose Judgement shal we stand hérin q hé? Truely q I, euen to the dome of our Hostesse if it please her to take it vpon her, wherupon shée béeing called very willingly vndertook it, so was the matter fully agréed and ou

hand

hands giuen there vpon. And then was the table couered for supper & (our Hoste hauing him selfe first giuē thanks to God) to supper wée went where wée fared right wel & were mery, and when wée had supped: the Cloth bæing remoued, and thanks likewise giuen. After wée had sitten stil and reposed our selues a little while: I my self began as followeth.

The end of the first Book.

The Second Book, declaring the Questions and Answers between the Author, the Hoste, and Pierce Plowman.

1 THe first Question put by me, whether it be more proper to vertue and godlynes to giue or to lend, or to pay that a man oweth.

Pierce Plowman answered, that of those thrée to giue was the best, to lend was the next, & as for paying that which a man oweth: he held it a duty, & in doing of duty there standeth no Godlynes, neither lieth there any thank therin, & that (he said) appéreth by Christe his owne words who sayeth, that when wée haue don that which was our duty: wée are vnprofitable seruants, neither hath paying, of debts any expresse testimony of Godlynes or vertue, in the Scriptures of God, or by common experience among men, wheras giuing hath a name of vertue, namely of liberallitie wherof the Prophet Dauid speaketh thus. He hath dispersed and giuen vnto the poore, and his righteousnes remaineth for euer. Again of lending he saith. The righteous is mercifull and lendeth, and will guide his words with discresion. To be short, liberalitie (which extendeth both vnto giuing and also lending) is a propertie of God, who both giueth and lendeth vnto vs his dayly gifts and blessings, but borowe he cānot neither pay his debt. And so shortly paying of debt in his opinion no vertue ne propertie of Godlines, for that it is a thing which God him selfe cannot dō, and so the first twaine, vertues and the third no vertue, but a duty.

OVr Hoste maintained the contrary, & that to pay a mans debt is the moste excellent qualitie & vertue of the thrée,

and

and moſte peculier and proper vnto the children of God, and that the other twaine are no vertues, neither deſerue that name, ſaue ſo far forth as they are included within this, and for proofe therof thus he reaſoneth. Whatſoeuer is or may be cauſe of euill: that ſame thing may it ſelf be ſaid to be euill. What ſoeuer act corrupteth or diſhoneſteth the doer or the ſufferer therof, or els bothe: that act is or may be euil, contrariwiſe, whatſoeuer act doth not neither cannot corrupt or diſhoneſt the doer nor the ſufferer therof nor any other perſon: that act ſaith he neither is euill, neither by any meanes can be made or called euil. Lending ſaith he, oft times corrupteth and diſhoneſteth the doer therof, namely for Vſurye, ſelling the deerer for day giuen, both theſe are lendings in their kindes, and yet not any properties of Godlines nor vertue. But to ſpeak of the beſt lending and that which is ſimply wout any of the regards aforeſaid, yet meaneth the lender to haue his things again, and therfore what godlynes is there ſaith Chriſte if you bid them to dinner ỹ can bid you againe, what great godlynes haue you ſhewed therin, and ſo much of lending. Gifts are giuen oft times to corrupt and to peruert Juſtice, and therby both the doer and ſufferer diſhoneſted. Gifts are giuen by the couetous in hope to receiue greater. Gifts are giuen by flatterers and Clawbacks, namely ſuperfluous and exceſſiue feaſts and banquets vnto Princes and great eſtates,, to the end vnder their authoritie to ride vpon the poore and godly people, and to deuoure and ſpoyle the labours of all others of the common and meaner ſorte, to the great oppreſſion of vertue and godlynes, and to the great increaſe of al wickednes and vngodlynes. Gifts are giuen in ſimulation of frendſhipp when nothing is ſo little ment, and ſo wickednes vtterly concluded therby. In giuing is oſtentation and vaine glory, and theſe two are the fathers and mother of flattery. For where Thraſo is Gnatho wil be alſo, giuing vnto one freend and not vnto the reſt, if a man haue many: procureth their hatred and enuye againſt both the giuer and the receiuer. Shortly it ſtandeth togither to be a large giuer: and yet a moſte wicked and vngodly perſon, and therof are

great

great examples namely of Cateline, of whom Saluſt writeth that he was prodigall of his owne, & desirous of other mens. And of Silla that cruell Tirant hée reporteth this, he would giue no man more frankly, lend he would also very liberally, but what soeuer he could borowe: he would neuer pay againe. Now vnto the third part, to wit paying a mans debt, and which (saith he) I call the moste high and soueraign vertue, and the moste proper vnto Godlines, and that for these causes. First it neither corrupteth nor dishonesteth the dwer nor the sufferer therof, for I am sure al men wil confesse that a man may honestly pay that which he oweth, and he vnto whom he ought it, may honestly craue the same.

Paying of det corrupteth no Iustice neither I suppose can be prowued euer to haue don in paying of det there is no ostentation of vaine glory, for it is not the déed of a proud minde, whose propertie is not to acknowledg any good turn for that might charge him with duty of acquitall wheron the proud and vngodly differ chéefly from vertuous and godly, for the proud may not séeme to haue néeded any mans good turn neither to haue vsed their help, both which things in paying their det they should implicatiuely confesse to haue don, and therfore are they ashamed to repay what so they can borrow for the Conclusion aforesaid. And that standeth wel with the saying of Iesus of Sirack who saith that what so the vngodly can borrowe: hée accounteth it as if hée had found it, wherof the reason is this, although pure néed and necessitie constrain them oft to vse this word (lend) yet they vse him for a cloke of dissimulation as the effect sheweth, for this is euident that there are but foure waies of attainment or getting of whatsoeuer thing, for it is either giuen vs, lent vs, or els wée take it perforce, or els wée found it.

So that whatsoeuer is lent vnto such people either it is giuen or lent, or taken by force or els found.

Giuen you wil say it is not, nor so ment by you, and you shall finde the same by him that tok it at your hands, for hée will neuer giue you thanks therfore, neither sée you but against his hart.

Borowed

Borowed it was not vpon his behalf, and consequently not vpon yours, howsoeuer you ment in departing therwith for except there be a borower: there can be no lender, for they are corelatiue and none can be without other, no more then there can be a Father without a Childe, then if the one did not borrowe: the other did not lend, hée borrowed not, for you shall finde that with his good will hée neuer ment to pay it again. Ergo you lent it not.

Hée took not from you perforce for your self deliuered it, so then if you neither gaue it, lent it, neither left by force, then there remaineth but a fourth, which is that you lost it and hée hath found it, according to the saying of Iesus of Sirack, for what soeuer a man findeth hée took it from no man neither is he bound to thank any man therfore, and that this is the manner of the vngodly: the Prophet Dauid beareth witnesse where hée saith The vngodly boroweth and payeth not again, but the righteous is mercifull and liberall, Thus it appéereth (quoth our Hoste) that who so truely paieth his det hée can not therin be called an euil person or be said to haue corrupted or dishonested neither him self or any other bodie, and therin farre excelleth this quallitie both the other.

¶ But now it resteth mée to prowe (quoth hée) that this word (to pay a mans det) doth include both the rest so farre forth as they may or can be called vertues or properties of godlines which I wil prowe in this order.

¶ First say, that whatsoeuer wée haue héer in this world: wée haue it at the bountifull & mercifull hands of our God as lent and which hée may at his pleasure take from vs, as also wée dayly sée him do. Then if wée haue nothing but that we haue receiued: (as Saint Paule saith) wée must néds confesse wée are indetted vnto him therfore. How then can we pay vnto him our det for hée receiueth no money: we cannot feast him, for hée neither eateth Buls flesh nor drinketh the blod of Goates. It resteth then that wée giue vnto them that are héer his Bayliffes and Receiuers for that intent and purpose, and vnto them in whose personnes hée hath figured him self vnto vs to wit vnto his powre and godly Saints and ser-

uaunts that are héer vpon the Earth among vs, vnto whome whatsoeuer wée giue hée hath promised to accept it, as giuen vnto him as a payment of so much det, a testimony not of our merit: but of our working faith in his grace and mercy, and in this only sence and meaning, giuing and lending are vertues and proper vnto the Children of God.

2. THe next Question put by our Hoste, was whether is the harder matter to make a Lord or a Gentleman.

Pierce answered, ꝙ in all common reason & also by experience the harder thing: the harder is the doing therof, a Lord (ꝙ hée) is a greater degrée then a Gentleman, and therfore harder to be made then a Gentleman.

I Answered that I thought and knew the contrary by experience. For I knew (quoth I) where a Churle by hie purchase of Mannour is become Lord of a number better men then him self, and so is hée a Lord and yet no Gentleman.

3. THe next Question of Pierce Plowman was why poore men are not called to office of estate and gouernment in common welths but euermore the rich and welthy.

OVr Hoste answered, becau se quoth hée, the poore would be rich and so are not content with their present estate, but to desire alteration and chaunge and all such persones are more mét to be commaunded then to commaund in a commõ welth. But of the rich and welthie it is clean otherwise, for they are already that which they poore haue desire to be, and therfore content, and consequently Frends and furtherers of peace and vnitie which is neuer nor neuer wil be where they haue authoritie in their hands that are not content with their owne present state, and so great hazard of the common peace lieth therin.

4. THe next Question by mée what is the reason that the Sonnes and Children of great purchasers, namely Lawyers and Merchants, are commonly such horrible and shameleſſe

shamelesse vnthrifts.

PIerce answerered that hée knew no reason therin but hée thought it a very secret Judgement of God vpon the parents that haue eaten soure Grapes and set their Childrens téeth an edge.

OUr Hoste said it argued great equitie and consience in their Children in that they ment to buy wit, and to pay as déer therfore as their fathers and fréends had sold theirs.

5 The next Question by our Hoste, what was first the reason of giuing and wearing of mourning gownes and garments for such as are deceased.

PIerce answered hée thought it was in fauour of our imbicilitie and weaknes, and for that reason: are not so prone and ready to wéep so sore, namely rich widowes who cannot wéep so redily as a dog can make water, and therfore it was thought expedient that such mourning were, and that such as could not mourne for other busines: they might be allowed vnto them some honest and coulorable meanes to mourn by atturney, as wée sée ẏ in matters of law, he that for other necessary busines cannot attend vpon his causes: is receiued by his Attourney, and of these great heires, executors and rich widowes that are otherwise necessarily occupied and haue no leisure to wéep: it was thought in like maner. Also it was thought profitable for the parties themselues for that it is an honest mean of publicatiõ aswel of the widowhood as also of her great heuines, therfore wherby the more Counselers may resort vnto her, for in strange places a widowe is known from other by her wéeping and sorow.

6. THe next Question by pierce what differeth a couetous person from a Niggard. ¶ Our Hoste answered a niggard is affraid to want him self, and therfore husbandeth and spareth, and oft liueth besides his owne. But the couetous is wursse affraid least others should not want and therfore kéepeth and engrosseth all to defraude the hungrie soule, and make the poore want bread.

7. THe next Question by mée why such folke as delight in rich and costly apparell, and also in delicat and dainty meats

and drinks, doo not eat and drink in the open streets as they doo weare their apparell. ¶ Pierce answered, because that for their delicate fare: no body would honor or reuerence thē except they gaue them part with them, which because they purpose not to doo: therfore they holde it best to eat it within doores and in secret, but in their braue apparell there lieth some honor at the least as they suppose, because they see many ỹ meet them strike their sailes therat although as great and the like reason in the one as in the other.

8. THe next Question by our Hoste why the best and daintiest meats and drinks and such as breed and make the moste and best nurishment in the body, doo not also breed the best maner but rather the contrary.

I Answered, because that commonly folks take to much of them, and haue so great felicitie therin, the rather that the ministers of voluptuousnes and sensualitie may thriue, but the cheefest and best reason seemeth to be this. that men may knowe that Godlines and vertus are not tied vnto meat and drink, neither doo consist therin, as Christe hath said. The kingdome of heauen is neither meat nor drink, and to moue vs therfore to eat and drink to liue, and not to liue to eat and drink.

9. THe next Question by me, what possession is the best and surest, and least subiect vnto rauin and violence.

OVr Hoste answered the best things and the wurst for vertue which is the best possession, a man may carry farre enough without beeing robbed therof, and for that either man or woman offer to take it from him, and as it is of the best: so is it of the wurst, for once (quoth hee) I lost a Gloue which was taken vp and brought after me.

10. THe next Question by our Hoste, whether beautie and honestie may dwell togither in one house, and be tenaunts both vnto one Landlord or not.

Pierce said, he knew no cause to the contrary, except the Landlord (quoth he) to be a Purchaser of Land, or a great builder or both, then Beautie must haue a Licence of the

Justice

Iustice to kéep a Seller or a bowling alley or an inordinary table or els all three, and then honestie must take a house farther of.

11. THe next Question by Pierce, what is the reason that some Women dow so curle and lay forth their haires.

THe answere by our Hoste, for that to be berdlesse is in a man monstrous, and to be bauld headed in a woman as in a trée neuer to haue leaues, or ground grasse, and therfore least for want of shewing their haires they might peraduenture be suspected to be monsters: they make themselues very mosters in déed.

Dum vitant stulti vicua in contrarium currunt.

12. THe next Question by our Hoste, what is the end and purpose of so stately and sumptuous buildings of houses and so many Chimneyes therin now a dayes.

THe answere by Pierce phisick and naturall, that against all sicknesses, namely Ethicks and ptisicks, all things delighting the sences are holsome, and also al things prouoking & causing appetite. These delight the sences, namely the eyes, these sharpen the appetite, for they argue hunger and scarsitie within, neither is the smell of meat and drink hurtfull to weak stomacks, the Kitchin and the Buttrye béeing not so apparant, and euen at the first entry as in the olde buildings but rather farre of, and hard to finde, and with some labour and exercise except to him that knoweth which way they are His reason œconomicall politik, that it is a good defence against the haunt of Beggers, for there is no begger that hath either experience or wit that will goe thether for an almes, and so mony and charges saued therby.

13. THe next Question by me, wherin differed flatterers from Crowes and Rauens.

PIerce answered, they differ in this, that Crowes and Rauens will pick out a mans eyes when hée is dead but flatterers wil eat him while hée is yet aliue.

14. THe next Question by our Hoste, wherin haue the rich of this world aduauntage and prerogatiue aboue the poore.

MY answere was, that their prerogatiues are great and many, but chéefly these that in the rich: vices get credit and estimatiton due to vertue, as for the purpose in them robbery and extorcion to purchase, and lechery is solace, and so of the rest as it pleaseth their flatterers to magnify thē in their folies, and contrarywise in the poore: vertues are slaundered, simplicitie and playne dealing are holden foolishnes, because they dw not aduaunce.

15. THe next Question by Pierce, what disease is moste dangerous and hard to bée cured.

I Answered Pride, and a feuer Ethick in the third degrée for neither of those admitteth either cure or councell.

16. THe next Question by mée, wherfore the wise man bad his sonne beware of welth, and said not so vnto him of pouertie.

OVr Hoste answered, for that welth is a flatterer, and bedoteth man and woman, neither can he shewe them their frends, but pouerty doth, and like as foule wether warneth a fole to take his Cloke: so doth faire wether warne a wise man to dw the same.

17. THe next Question by our Hoste, who are they whose cost and labour deserue best thanks,

THeirs (quoth pierce) who the more they build the worse others are lodged, and the harder they fare and poorer dw liue, of these aske and enquire and ye shall finde but to many.

18. THE next Question by mée, what the Poets did meane by the story of Diomedes of whome they reported that he had horses whom he fed with mens flesh, and that lastly by Hercules he was giuen to be eaten of his owne horses.

OVr Hoste said, that by that tale as he thought, they meant the same or like that they meant by Acteon and his hounds

to

to wit that to delight in excesse of vaine pleasures & pastimes as in riding in Chariots or vpon great horses or in such stately maner to delight in hunting: requireth excessiue charges and expences, wherby they are forced to deale hardly with all that haue to dw with them, with their horses and hounds to deuoure both others and them selues also at length, also that ouermuch delight in such vanities, prophaneth the minde of man or woman, and maketh them to war barberous and void of all contemplation, for els why should they imagin a pair of Harts hornes to set vpon a mans head but for his wilde and beastly minde.

19. THe nert question by pierce, what vice hath don God the the moste and best seruice of late yéers.

OVr Hoste answered Pride, for hée hath bén a punisher of all other vices, for what pecuniall statute hath not he preferred and begged for the gaine therof, and whom hath he not inuaded therwith, and all to maintaine the filthie pride and excesse of a few.

10. THe nert question by pierce, what vertue hath of late yéres done moste harm vnto men, and moste dishonor vnto God.

THat hath liberalitie (quoth our Hoste,) namely theirs who vse to please others and yet depart from nothing them selues but all at other folkes charges, which hath bén very common of late yéers, bidding them spy out. &c. This setteth men one in an others top, and brocheth so much brabble, sute and quarel, this hath begotten vs so many reteiners, flatterers, promoters, maintainers, vnconcellers & Sicophants, ỳ hardly can any man account him self assured in any thing that he possesseth be it land, farme, lease or other comodity whatsoeuer, that he shall not haue his title scanned & searched to the quick. This hath caused the Merchants trade & his gain to be enquired vpon also, yea the very poore Artificer to be so sifted: that hardly can he liue by his trade, to the great offence of God and trouble of the common welth.

¶Heer end our questions and solucions, and follow our tales.

OVr Hoste began his tale as followeth: It fortuned quoth hée, within this twelue moneths last within fiue miles of this

this place, there fell a brabble betweén two rich men concerning trepasses by words & speeches, wherupon one of them sued the other & had demanded by action M.l. damages. I can not tell how, at length they were both content to put the matter vnto two men of worship their neighbours, and became bound in great sõmes either to other to stand to their awarde & order therin. The plaintif for their better instructiõ deliuered vnto tharbitrators a copy of his declaration & of ỳ whole issue, wherin the party Defendant to some of the matter had pleaded not giltie: & other some had iustified, wherupon th'arbitrators hauing duely considered, and heard their allegations: for further proof of both their matters, ordered as followeth, that the partie defendant béeing guiltie of diuers misbehauiours by the Plaintise against him alleadged: should therfore pay two hundred fiftie pound vnto the common tresure of fiue Parishes next adioining, to be there imploied and bestowed at the discretion of the moste honest and best of the said Parishes and vnto the partie plaintif for all his costs yd. this awarde béeing shewed and read vnto the parties they were both highly displeased therat.

The plaintif for that the Arbitrators had giuen that vnto Strangers (saith hée) which should haue béen his and so haue exceéded the limits of their authoritie and the tenour of his submission. The defendant thought him gréeued with the greatnes of the sum and so both the parties highly displeased.

The Arbitrators maintained their awarde and order to be both iust and reasonable. First for the Defendaunt, they said they were of duety bound to punish him vpon good & due proofs made by his Aduersarie of his il & vngodly behauiour, where neuertheless they had qualified his punishment and the demaunde by his Aduersary. As touching the plaintif and the sum which hée demaũded by the name and tearm of amends: their answere was that they ment it such to wit an amends and that not only vnto one of them but to them both for they hoped that the Defendaunt by that time hée hath paied the two hundred & fiftie pounds will be better héerafter as concerning the like offence and so hée hath his amends, but

what

what or how you would haue bẽn amended by the receit of so much money paid vnto you: if it might haue appẽred vnto vs: wee verily would haue adiudged it vnto you, but that could wee neuer perceiue nor be perswaded to beleeue, for we neuer heard that honor, vertue, godlynes and the estimation therin are or euer were valued or valuable by money taking, but rather in departing there from, for as the last doth shew a noble, gentle and a godly hart and mynde: so doth the first argue the moste vile abiect and baseste minded person that euer can be & one in whome is vtterly mispriſon of all vertue as wel witnesseth S. Peter vnto Simon Magus, wherfore (said they) we thought that in this distributiõ which we mean to be your act: you haue vnto the world sufficiently disprowed whatsoeuer euil your Aduersary hath purposed to bring vpon you as touching your estimation or good name and haue shewed your self in very dẽd such a man as in the preamble of your declaration you gladly would be taken to be, and such as if you be not alredy: wee verily think that the receit of all this and ten times as much more will neuer make you, and therfore can be called no mends vnto you in the taking: but rather in the honest distributing therof, which we holde a iust and reasonable Iudgement in all actions of such nature.

¶ With that the two parties drew forth either others obligation, & cancelled them bothe, and tok hands and departed home great Frends spite of the Arbitrators and of their awarde, and so yͤ Churles were made frends.

THis tale bẽing ended, Pierce Plowman would nẽds acquite with an other tale not vnlike. It chaunced one day (quoth hẽ) while I was in my Councellers Chamber in the Inner Temple: there came a woman dwelling about the Strand, and prayed his councell, and what action she might bring against an other woman a neighbour of hers, that had said to her in open presence of diuers of her neighbours, that she had already twise escaped the Gallowes. My Lawyer asked of her if she had neuer in her life passed by a pair of Gallowes. She answered yes. So haue I don (quoth he) I thank my God, and that some time when there haue bẽn a dozen

hanged, and so I think haue you (quoth hée). True it is Sir quoth she. Then quoth he, ye cannot recouer for those words, for they beare good couller of iustification, and also shew that ye haue had better fortune then possible many a better mans Childe, and so haue I my self also. With this answere the good woman held her self wel apaid, and went her way content.

THen began my tale. There is dwelling in Holbourne (quoth I) and that not very far from the place where I do lye, a certain man whome I haue noted this long time to be a man of strange affection, for béeing a man of great wealth and therfore the meeter for company, yet if any frend or neighbour require him to goe with them to the Tauern, to the Ale house, to the Theater, to ỳ Curtain as they tearm it, or to Paris garden or any such place of expence: he vtterly refuseth, & after their return that willed his company: his maner is to go vnto some one of them, desiring him to tel him truely what hée hath spent since his going forth, which hauing learned at him whether it be a grote or sixpence, more or lesse, hée goeth straight vnto a Cofer that hée hath standing secretly in his Chamber, which hath a Til, in the which Til there is a little clift, at the which clift hée putteth in asmuch mony as the partie said ỳ had spent, and this til, hée neuer openeth vntill the end of the yéer, so often times hée findeth ther in fortie shillings, oft times thrée or foure pound or more and this he taketh and bestoweth vpon his poore neighbours, and vpon other godly busines imployeth it.

And vpon the lid of his Chest is written in great Romain letters, take from thy kinde, and giue to the blinde.

This tale béeing ended, the night some what far run: our Hoste telle warned vs therof and that it was high time to go to bed, which we were all contented to do sauing Pierce Plowman, who had yet one other tale to tel, and prayed vs to giue him the hearing, which we graunted him, and then hée began.

¶ There is hèer about (quoth Pierce) a Gentleman that hath enlarged his rent but not his land (where in many are very expert at this day) & once vpon a time of my being in his house

houſe there came in a poore tenaunt of his, one that had béen long tenaunt both to his father and others his Auncestors, which poore man pittifully ſaid vnto him as followeth.

Alas Sir (quoth hée) in your Fathers and graundfathers dayes I liued wel and kept at the leaſt twentie Kine beſides Oxen and horſes, and now through your hard dealing with me I am not able to kéep twain.

Wel quoth the Gentleman thou lieſt, for I haue béen better to thée: then euer my Father or Grandfather was, for where by thine owne confeſſion in their time thou didſt kéep but twentie Kine: now thou maiſt kéep two hundred at the leaſt, for now (quoth hée) through my frendſhip thou maiſt be the common Neat heard, and kéep al the beaſts in the town.

And thus our tales béeing all ended: wée required the ſentence of our Hoſteſſe therin, ſhée ſaid that truely in her opinion the Stranger (meaning mée) had tolde the beſt tale and wherby ſhée had gotten moſte Example of edification and knowledge, whereby to help and inſtruct both her ſelf and others, and giuing mée great and hartie thanks therfore: ſhée gaue Judgement that I ſhould break my faſt the next day at the charges of her Huſband and Pierce Plowman, ſhée ſaid farther that to that man of whome I tolde the tale: ſhée was better, if ſhe knew how to do him good.

¶ So héer wée ended, and went to bed, and the next day Pierce Plowman was vp very early, and called mée vp and our Hoſte, (as ſithens I haue learned his maner is alwaies to do) gathered vs all together with the reſidue of his houſeholde, meiny, Children and Seruants.

And hée him ſelf red vnto vs a Chapter of the new Teſtament, and then wée altogether ſung the fiftéen Pſalme of Dauid, and that don to breakfaſt went, and after breakfaſt: I my ſelf would néeds pay the whole charges therof, and did, (notwithſtanding the awarde of our Hoſteſſe and their great inſtance to the contrary.)

And when I would departe: my Hoſte and Pierce Plowman would (whether I would or no) bring mée on my way to Doncaſter, and did, and there cauſed mée to haue great en-

tertainment without a peny charges for one whole day, and then wee took either leaue of other, and departed each of vs toward his owne.

After which departure, vpon the way as I traueled: I remembred ỹ Prophet Dauid who saith. I was glad when it was said vnto mee, wee shall go into the house of the Lord, which I suppose be neuer ment by a cõmon Inne or hosterie, where neuertheless I may safely say I found it. And therfore full true it is ỹ Ouid saith, there is oftentimes a god fish in a water where a man would little think. Wee boast much of ciuilitie and nurture in the South partes of this land, namely in London, and dispraise and dispise the North as rude and vnciuil, but surely for mine owne parte (that am a Southernman and borne in Kent) to speak indifferently for any thing that euer I haue found in all my trauel in both the partes: I cannot see nor know why the Northern People should not rather pittie vs then enuie vs concerning either Godlynes, Vertue or good maners, for heer I haue spoken of the baselt kinde of People, wherby it may partly approue what hope there is of the Gentlemen, merchants and them of the good Townes and Citties, for whose sakes and generally for all others I vndertok to gather and to report this little Conference, and with Gods help and fauour haue don it as nér accordant to the trueth as I could, neither adding therto nor taking there from, the desire wherof caused mée to take the lesser Journeis homewarde and to write it by parcells at my Innes leall I might haue forgotten it.

And hérin I protest, that I haue neither flattered nor belyed any man, for my meaning is trueth and the commendation therof, and therin is no flattery, for surelie if I haue flattered any body: it is mine owne self in ỹ, that where before I was perswaded that pride had vtterly corrupted this whole common welth and had clean ouer spred it with his generation of all vngodlynes and wickednes wherof all times and ages do agrée him to be the father: sithence this Journey I begin to hope ỹ God will haue mercy vpon vs, and hath and that hée hath reserued vnto him self a remnaunt as hée did

in

in the time of Elias, for whose sakes hée will spare the rest as hée offered vnto Abraham touching Sodome and Gomorra.

Therfore the intent of this my collection thus appearing: I refer my self to the iudgement of them to whose hãds it shal hérafter come, desiring their good word in recompence therof, and also of my long and weary Iourney wherof this labour was mine only reward.

Beséching Almightie God of his great mercie and clemency to graunt vnto the same no worse effect then I haue ment therin, and that by the Appostles councel, we may consider that wée are but strangers and pilgrimes hér in earth, and that there after wée may order our liues and conuersation longing for our owne Cuntrie, content to suffer, and to forbeare and glad to heare or sée the thing that may bée for our edifying, learning and knowledge to bée the méter and better welcome into our Cuntrie which is the Heauenly Ierusalem whether God for Christes sake bring vs all

Amen.

FINIS.

Laus Deo.

*Fœlix qui potuit Rerum cognoscere causas.

Who wil arise with me against the wicked, or who wil take my part against the euil dooers.

THE APOLOGIE AND

Conclusion of the Author.

THus ended is this shorte Collection,
Rude and vnperfect for his want of skil:
Who should haue giuen it perfection,
and would, if his might had been to his wil
Or els if time had therunto sufficed:
To haue perused it and recognised.

¶ But for as much as I did fayle of bothe,
To wit, of Learning and also of time:
And to let dye such matter I was lothe,
Though I ne could it duely enlumine.
Yet for my God and for my Cuntries sake:
We thought of force I must it vndertake.

And namely for the worthy Shire of Kent,
Famous of olde time for humanitie:
As is to finde in writing auncient,
Besides what dayly proof doth testifie.
Sith I was borne in her me thought of right:
I ought to bring this matter into right.

¶ So strongly ruleth loue the hart of man,
Namely that loue which is so naturall:
To do his Cuntry good in what he can.
That his good hart is to be borne withall.
For God requesteth of a man but will:
Although he want wherwith it to fulfil.

These

¶ These are the causes why I took on mee,
To be reporter of this Conference:
which I haue done as heer is plain to see,
As neer as I could follow their sentence.
wherin if I haue failed any whit:
I pray you in good part to taken it.

¶ For first touching the matter in substance,
The speakers are the Authors and not I:
As for the order in deliueraunce,
I put in the Readers curtesie.
To mend it or to take it as it is:
For he is wise that doth nothing amisse.

FINIS.

Aut bibe aut Abi.